Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5635th meeting

Friday, 23 February 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Kubiš	(Slovakia)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Okio
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Indonesia	Mr. Jenie
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Ms. Wolcott Sanders

Agenda

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

Implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006)

Letter dated 12 February 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/84)

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07-24806 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

Implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006)

Letter dated 12 February 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/84)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, Cuba, El Salvador, Germany, Guatemala, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Uruguay and Viet Nam in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I am pleased to invite the following participants under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council: Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs; Mr. Rogelio Pfirter, Director General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons; Mr. Gustavo Zlauvinen, Representative of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency to the United Nations; and Mr. Michael Schmitz, Director of Compliance and Facilitation of the World Customs Organization.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw attention to document S/2007/84, which contains a letter dated 12 February 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Slovakia addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

Allow me to start the deliberations by making some introductory remarks. It is an honour and a privilege for me to open, for the second time this week, a Security Council debate convened by Slovakia — this time on the issue of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which is at least of the same importance as the debate on security sector reform that took place on Tuesday.

Based on the experience we acquired in holding the chairmanship of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), our underlying motivation for organizing this open debate on the issue of cooperation between the Security Council and international organizations in the implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006) was to create an opportunity for States Members of the United Nations and the relevant invited organizations to share experiences and lessons learned in the areas covered by resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006).

Establishing and enforcing sound and effective measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery is a challenge that requires the international community's ongoing attention. Our intention is to concentrate on the most urgent issues which are discussed in particular at the meetings of the 1540 Committee.

We expect that today's meeting will be used to look at the possibility of providing assistance to those States which have not yet submitted their national reports. Given that some countries still have gaps in their national legislative systems controlling sensitive goods and technologies, we also anticipate a discussion about areas of cooperation with those invited organizations that are mentioned directly in resolution 1540 (2004) and regularly participate in the outreach activities of the 1540 Committee.

It is therefore my pleasure to welcome among us Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs; Mr. Rogelio Pfirter, Director

General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons; Mr. Gustavo Zlauvinen, Representative of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency to the United Nations; and Mr. Michael Schmitz, Director General of Compliance and Facilitation of the World Customs Organization.

Finally, I should like to welcome all delegations that will be speaking today, and I look forward to a fruitful and productive discussion.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I should like to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Speakers with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in the Chamber and to deliver a condensed version when speaking. I shall now give the floor to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka.

Mr. Tanaka: I would like to thank you for convening this timely and important open debate. While the dangers arising from the global proliferation of terrorist acquisition of weapons of mass destruction are now widely recognized, much work remains to be done to reduce such threats. In this respect, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) is continuing efforts to promote the full implementation of the resolution, including through enhanced outreach, dialogue, assistance and cooperation throughout the international community.

I particularly welcome the participation of representatives from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the World Customs Organization (WCO). These three international organizations play crucial roles in the implementation of the process, especially through their practical experience and lessons learned in the areas covered by resolution 1540 (2004), and through their assistance programmes to facilitate the implementation of the resolution.

The threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in fact represents a most urgent task. In the past year, I have seen to it that this issue is at the forefront of the work of the Department for Disarmament Affairs. Last year, the Department organized three regional outreach seminars on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) involving more than 70 participating countries from the regions. Seminars were held in Beijing for the Asia-Pacific region, in Accra for the African region and in Lima for Latin America and the Caribbean region. I attended all of those seminars personally. I would like to thank all three organizations for participating in them. The presentations by experts greatly contributed to the success of these seminars. I also appreciate Ambassador Peter Burian's able leadership in organizing them. After three seminars, I believe that we are now getting into the next phase of the implementation of the resolution. We need more tailored approaches to meet the requirements of the regions, sub-regions and even Member States.

This cooperation among inter-governmental bodies is essential in implementing resolution 1540 (2004) and in building support for it throughout the international community. I believe this cooperation is an effective illustration of how sustained multilateral cooperation can work to advance the national security interests of all States and strengthen international peace and security.

The President: I now call on the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter.

Mr. Pfirter: I would like to thank you for the kind invitation to attend this meeting. I am pleased to have this important opportunity to brief the Security Council on various aspects of the mandate and functioning of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and to highlight the important role it has to play in chemical disarmament and non-proliferation.

The threat of chemical terrorism cannot be underestimated. Ease of access to dual-use chemicals and readily available knowledge of the technologies and processes required to manufacture chemical weapons make them a potential instrument of choice for terrorists. Only yesterday we learned that Iraq, a country whose people have in the past endured the terrible consequences of the use of chemical weapons, has suffered yet another series of cowardly attacks involving chlorine, which was used to kill and injure unprotected, innocent civilians.

With your permission, Mr. President, I would like to read out a statement issued on my behalf at OPCW headquarters today and here in New York.

> "As Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, I condemn in the strongest possible terms the recent multiple use of chlorine gas by groups in Iraq to kill and injure innocent civilians. The international community has firmly rejected the use of toxic chemicals under any circumstances to inflict harm, as demonstrated by the overwhelming international support for the global ban on such weapons. The Chemical Weapons Convention has 181 States parties, and Member States of the United Nations have unanimously condemned the use of poison gas.
>
> I urge all Governments, particularly those in the Middle East region, whether or not they are parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, to join me in stating clearly that the use of poison gas is unacceptable."

The role of the OPCW in bringing about a comprehensive prohibition on chemical weapons is indispensable to the larger objectives of the United Nations in promoting international peace and security. Resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006) recognize the need for multilateral cooperation in this area.

Many of the measures in the operative paragraphs of resolution 1540 (2004) dealing with chemical weapons correspond to obligations that States parties have assumed under the Convention.

Operative paragraph 1 of resolution 1540 (2004) stipulates that States should refrain from providing any form of support to non-State actors that attempt in any way to develop or acquire weapons of mass destruction. This is fully in line with the general obligations set out in article I of the Convention and further developed in article VII.

As you know, the OPCW is not an anti-terrorist organization. Nevertheless, by helping States parties to meet all requirements regarding national implementation, it helps ensure that dangerous chemicals are not misused in any manner, including for terrorism.

In December 2001, two months after the terrible attacks against the United States of America, our Executive Council adopted a specific decision on the contributions of the OPCW to the anti-terrorism effort. These contributions include promoting universal adherence to the Convention and the full implementation of national obligations under the Convention.

The objective of universal adherence to the Convention remains fundamental to the achievement of its object and purpose. This goal is also reaffirmed in resolution 1540 (2004).

The failure of 14 United Nations Member States to join the Convention continues to be an issue of concern, including, in certain cases, as regards non-proliferation. This is particularly serious in the case of the Middle East and in the Korean Peninsula, where we hope that recent developments will bring into sharper focus the need to address accession to the Convention by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

I will now turn to the specific aspects I referred to earlier concerning the destruction of chemical weapons. According to the Convention, States parties must declare any chemical weapons stockpiles, including those which are old and abandoned. Operative paragraph 3 of resolution 1540 (2004) rightly addresses the need to develop appropriate measures to ensure accountability and physical protection of relevant materials. Under our Convention, six States parties, Albania, India, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and another State Party have between them declared approximately 71,000 metric tons of Category 1 and 2 chemical weapons. Overall, more than 16,600 metric tons of chemical weapons have already been destroyed under the verification regime of the OPCW. This figure represents nearly a quarter of the declared global total. The steps taken in this connection clearly contribute to global security, while reducing opportunities for non-State actors to gain access to existing stockpiles.

We also carry out industry inspections. Since June 1997, when inspections began for the purpose of non-proliferation, the Secretariat has carried out over 2,700 inspections, including over 1,100 industrial inspections in 73 States parties.

It is to the credit of the drafters of the Convention that a treaty that had its beginnings in the cold war era and was intended to address activities at the State level also allows us to respond to today's threats.

In view of the need to ensure full implementation of the Convention, our Conference of States Parties adopted a plan of action to assist States parties that

have yet to meet their obligations, under the articles of the Convention, to enact implementing legislation and to establish a National Authority.

Let me note that, in many cases, delays by Governments in the fulfilment of their Convention obligations are not the result of a lack of political will, but are due to a scarcity of specific legal expertise.

The OPCW secretariat has actively focused on offering practical on-site assistance tailored to the needs of the States Parties that have requested it. Thus far, we have worked on 241 drafts of implementing legislation from 117 States parties.

At least 25 States parties have also offered significant bilateral assistance. Of our 181 States parties, 172 — that is to say, 95 per cent — have established or designated a national authority. Sixty-three per cent of them have reported that they have adopted legislative or administrative measures to implement the Convention. One hundred States parties, or 56 per cent, have informed us of the measures they have in place to control transfers of scheduled chemicals. Fifty-six States parties, or 31 per cent, have indicated that they have reviewed their regulations on trade in chemicals and have confirmed that those regulations are consistent with the object and purpose of the Convention.

Hundreds of thousands of tons of scheduled chemicals are traded internationally every year for purposes not prohibited under the Convention. In order to ensure that that is done only for peaceful purposes, we count on the invaluable support not only of Governments, but also of the chemical industry. The involvement and cooperation of that industry stems not only from its laudable support for the Convention in general, but also from the evident risk of possible attacks on chemical facilities — attacks by terrorists that would turn industrial sites into horrendous weapons.

Under article X of the Convention, each State party is entitled to receive assistance and protection. Our activities in this area are central to our mission and are, again, fully consistent with the provisions of resolution 1540 (2004).

The OPCW is also mandated to undertake investigations of any alleged use of chemical weapons and is equipped with the technical means and expertise to do so. Here, I would note that, in the case of alleged use of chemical weapons involving State non-parties, the OPCW is mandated to cooperate closely with the United Nations Secretary-General and that, if so requested, it will put its resources at the Secretary-General's disposal.

Since the Convention entered into force in 1997, we have trained more than 2,300 first responders within our States parties. For instance, in October 2005 we conducted a field exercise, Joint Assistance 2005, together with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Ukraine. We also conducted an exercise organized by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Finnish Ministry of the Interior. In all of these exercises, the hypothesis was an attack by terrorists either on a plant or on facilities within States members.

In just a couple of months, the OPCW will be observing the tenth anniversary of its establishment and of the entry into force of the Convention on 27 April 1997. During that short time, we have made steady progress in carrying out our mandate. Indeed, we take a measure of pride in what has been accomplished in those 10 years.

The Convention and its disarmament and non-proliferation agenda are being implemented effectively and in an exemplary manner. Our States parties have every reason to commemorate this important milestone in the history of disarmament. As members may know, I have extended a formal invitation on behalf of the OPCW to the Secretary-General to attend the commemoration ceremonies, which are to take place in The Hague on 9 May 2007. I believe that his presence and personal involvement in our commemoration would symbolize not only his own support, but that of the entire membership of the United Nations, for the work of the OPCW, an organization that confirms daily that even the most sensitive issues having to do with disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction can be dealt with multilaterally and by consensus.

In closing, I wish to thank the members of the Council for this timely opportunity to address them on the work of the OPCW.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Gustavo R. Zlauvinen, representative of the

Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency to the United Nations.

Mr. Zlauvinen: The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), too, is pleased to participate in this relevant meeting of the Council.

Many programmes and activities of the IAEA are relevant to resolution 1540 (2004). The IAEA General Conference has invited the Agency's secretariat to provide assistance to member States, upon request and within the scope of the Agency's statutory responsibilities, for the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

In particular, the Nuclear Security Plan for 2006-2009 provides a compilation of activities and a plan for their implementation. Through these activities, the Agency assists States in preventing nuclear material and related technologies from falling into the hands of non-State actors and, accordingly, helps States fulfil their international obligations, including those required under resolution 1540 (2004).

The relevant programmes and activities include, inter alia, the following: first, to provide legislative and regulatory assistance to enable member States to adopt the necessary legislation to implement instruments under the Agency's purview, such as safeguards agreements, additional protocols and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material; secondly, to assist in strengthening member States' systems for controlling nuclear material and related technology so as to enable Governments to implement legal instruments to which they subscribe and to tighten national controls; thirdly, to provide support to States for the implementation of high standards of physical protection of nuclear material, nuclear facilities and nuclear transports; and fourthly, to provide support for States' efforts to upgrade border controls in order to enhance the capability to detect illicit trafficking in nuclear material and related technologies.

In addition, the IAEA facilitates the development and publishing of a series of policy documents on nuclear-security guidance containing recommendations and proposing practical arrangements on how States can implement their international obligations that are relevant to strengthening nuclear security. Such guidance, on how to establish and maintain a system of accounting for and control of nuclear material, facilitates the implementation of States' obligations pursuant to their respective safeguards agreements. In addition, guidance on the design and maintenance of a physical protection regime applicable to nuclear material and facilities is needed to support consistent implementation of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

To further assist States in their efforts to implement their international obligations, the Agency offers and carries out evaluation and assessment services to help States identify what needs to be improved in the area of nuclear security, including their national systems for the accounting and control of nuclear material and their regimes for the physical protection of nuclear material and facilities. Since 2003, more than 70 such peer-based review missions have been carried out by the Agency.

Capacity-building continues to be a cornerstone of the Nuclear Security Plan for 2006-2009. As part of it, the Agency helps States to address key needs in human resource development. The Agency offers a comprehensive education and training programme with a wide variety of education and training events, including technical and scientific visits and on-the-job training in the fields of physical protection of nuclear material and facilities and illicit trafficking. Last year, a nuclear-security training course for lawyers was held by the Agency to create a pool of legal experts who would be available for participation in nuclear security missions. Since 2003, approximately 150 training events have been carried out, with more than 3,000 participants from more than 100 countries.

The Agency has also responded to some States' physical protection needs by providing upgrades and technical support for improved physical protection of nuclear material and facilities. Some nuclear facilities have also received technical support to strengthen their nuclear-material accounting systems. For capacity-building in the area of detection of nuclear materials in illicit trafficking, including at border-crossing points, more than 800 detection instruments have been provided to some 20 countries.

The Agency's programmes and activities in the area of nuclear security are funded mostly from extrabudgetary resources. The Nuclear Security Fund has been established to receive voluntary financial contributions for that purpose. In addition, significant in-kind contributions are received from member States.

The cost of the activities carried out during 2006, for example, was $20 million.

These support efforts will continue in 2007. An increased number of assessment and evaluation missions; legal and regulatory support activities; a strengthened programme for human resource development; and the provision of technical assistance, including the necessary technical equipment, will be carried out by the IAEA. Regional resource centres will be established, through which much of the required training can be offered.

The Agency has also strengthened its international coordination efforts. Regular meetings are convened with member States and other international organizations. For example, the Agency develops, in consultation with individual member States, the integrated nuclear security support plans which bring together all of the work that is required to implement, inter alia, obligations under the legal instruments that are relevant in the nuclear area. Those plans provide comprehensive workplans for individual countries and can be used to help coordinate activities and generate the required resources. The plans improve the efficiency of existing resources and help to avoid caps. All activities are performed with due consideration to maintaining the confidentiality of sensitive information.

Let me present some suggestions on how to strengthen cooperation between the 1540 Committee and my organization. We would like to suggest that the 1540 Committee actively inform Member States of all the programmes and activities carried out by the IAEA. The most practical way forward continues to be for the Committee to encourage those Member States requiring assistance in the nuclear field to work directly with the Agency and to report their progress in the fulfilment of their international obligations, as appropriate, to the relevant bodies, in particular to the 1540 Committee.

Such implementation would be further encouraged if the Committee, in its summary reports, were to devote a dedicated chapter to the assistance provided by the IAEA for the fulfilment of obligations relevant to nuclear weapons and related materials. Information about IAEA activities in the nuclear field and security field can be found on the Agency's web page.

Finally, as a possible way for future interaction and cooperation, the Committee could share with the Agency information about those countries that have been identified by the 1540 Committee as needing further assistance.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Michael Schmitz, Director of Compliance and Facilitation of the World Customs Organization.

Mr. Schmitz: We appreciate this opportunity to explain how the World Customs Organization (WCO) might assist in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). Customs administrations worldwide face the trade-security/trade-facilitation dilemma. On one hand, there is the continuing growth in legitimate international trade, while on the other hand there is the illicit cross-border movement of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), drugs, counterfeit merchandise, dual-use chemicals, small arms, undeclared merchandise, currency, cultural property, hazardous materials and individuals.

In the light of the terrorist threat to the global economy, nations seek from their customs administrations economic and physical security, while international traders look for uniformity, predictability, transparency and efficiency in their dealings with customs agencies. The WCO finds itself in the business of globalizing and to the extent possible standardizing customs control efforts to improve both the security and the facilitation of the global supply chain. Our most visible effort to that end is the Framework of Standards — known as SAFE — a global supply chain security initiative developed at the WCO by the international trade community and WCO member customs administrations.

In the 15 to 20 years prior to 11 September 2001, customs administrations, particularly in the developed world, began focusing more on trade facilitation rather than continuing to support unnecessary customs controls. At the WCO, that trade facilitation focus led to the negotiation of the revised Kyoto Convention on the simplification and harmonization of customs procedures in 1999. Today, 52 WCO members, including all of the world's major trading nations, are signatories to the revised Kyoto Convention. However, 9/11 caused the world to refocus on customs control and to face a simple truth: that every nation has an absolute right to determine who and what will cross its

national borders. The instrument of this exercise of sovereign control is customs.

The joint industry customs task force that worked on the Framework built upon the work done on the revised Kyoto Convention and has produced guidelines on integrated border management, which is the single window through which to coordinate border agencies; integrated supply-chain management, which coordinates all links in the global supply chain; a revised data model that provides harmonized form and content of messages; and unique consignment reference policies, so that a shipment can be identified from origin to destination.

Working together, customs and the private sector produced the SAFE Framework of Standards. It was unanimously adopted by the WCO Council in June 2005, and in June 2006 the WCO Council approved a document on authorized economic operators as part of the SAFE Framework. To date, 144 of our 171 members have signed letters of intent to implementation the SAFE Framework. The theory underlying the SAFE Framework is that appropriate, focused and layered trade security measures will actually facilitate the movement of legitimate trade across national boundaries and thereby protect the global economy. The SAFE Framework reflects the realization of the fact that security and facilitation are inextricably intertwined.

The SAFE Framework has four core elements: advanced electronic manifest information; a consistent risk management approach; at the request of the importing nation, the outbound inspection of high-risk cargo at the point of export using non-intrusive detection equipment; and enhanced trade facilitation for legitimate trade that meets certain security standards. The SAFE Framework is built on two pillars: customs-to-customs network arrangements and customs-to-business partnerships. While not specifically set forth in the SAFE Framework, there is in reality a third pillar, namely customs cooperation with other national, regional and international Government organizations that have border control responsibilities.

The WCO has engaged other regional and international organizations such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the International Maritime Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the International Organization for Standardization, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, the European Union and the African Union, to ensure that the SAFE Framework is compatible with other security and facilitation guidelines being developed by those organizations and does not unduly burden the private sector with conflicting security standards.

We also work closely with the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Group of Eight, the World Health Organization, Interpol, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other international organizations on security matters that can impact the global supply chain. We work with those organizations on training and capacity-building efforts.

The SAFE Framework is a concept that moves customs focus from importation to exportation for security purposes. However, by focusing on the exportation of goods, customs will actually increase the facilitation of cargo upon importation. The concept is to identify high-risk shipments early in the global supply chain — at or before exportation — to allow for appropriate and timely control of high-risk cargo prior to its introduction into the global supply chain's more vulnerable transportation network. The SAFE Framework foresees the rapid release of legitimate cargo upon its importation by identifying international traders that demonstrate an appropriate degree of security within their supply chain. That concept pushes security further back in the global supply chain by involving the private sector, which has increased security in its supply chains.

How are we doing with this balancing act between security and facilitation? We are doing better than we were five years ago, but we are not yet where we want to be. Technology has been an enabler, but infrastructure and customs staffing are still real issues we have to face. Inevitably, trade volumes have continued to grow and security needs have increased. It has long been apparent to customs agencies that there are no physical security processes that can be successfully applied to match an ever-expanding threat potential while at the same time facilitating the rapid clearance of legitimate trade across national borders. Therefore, the sole means by which the safety of the

global supply chain can be secured without imposing a crippling impact on the necessary free flow of legitimate trade, is through the consistent and effective application of well-reasoned risk management regimes along with the effective use of technology and customs best practices in security and facilitation.

The WCO programme to control the exportation and importation of nuclear and radiological materials was developed nearly 15 years ago to further customs agencies' efforts to protect the societies they serve. Ten years ago, working with IAEA, WCO developed recommendations covering customs actions against illegal cross-border movement of nuclear and hazardous materials. Those comprehensive recommendations urged our members' administrations to recognize the need for the prevention, detection and repression of illicit movements of nuclear and hazardous substances. It called for appropriate legislation and powers to deal with all aspects of illegal trafficking in nuclear and hazardous material. It called for cooperation and the sharing of information on trafficking, and urged efforts to detect illicit cross-border movements.

WCO and IAEA entered into a memorandum of understanding in 1998; we exchange illicit trafficking data, co-sponsor seminars and jointly develop technical and training materials. We also collaborate with IAEA in the production of technical documents on prevention, detection and response. We have participated with IAEA in customs radiation safety training courses and reviewed IAEA illicit trafficking handbooks and guidelines for monitoring radioactive material in the international mail. We have also developed a secure encrypted customs enforcement network, which permits customs services to exchange information and communications and includes databases on nuclear materials and hazardous substances.

WCO has also, in the past two years, participated with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee in seven missions to assess the measures employed by countries to bring themselves into compliance with Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), which in part requires enhanced border security to prevent acts of terrorism.

At the end of the day, the one barrier that the actors in this play must cross is customs, and WCO and its member administrations stand ready to assist the United Nations and the members of this Council in their efforts.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on Slovakia's very successful presidency of the Security Council this month. We only regret the fact that this is a very short month, which represents a failure on the part of the calendar and not of your presidency.

As the initiator and a sponsor of Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006), the Russian Federation considers them to be key non-proliferation instruments in preventing weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and related materials from falling into the hands of non-State actors, particularly terrorists. We are convinced that ensuring the full implementation by all States of those resolutions is one of the principal means of counteracting the serious threat to international peace and security represented by the world-wide spread of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

The implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), which provides the basis for coordinated efforts to combat the black markets in weapons of mass destruction, will, given the scale and complexity of the targets it sets, be a labour-intensive and lengthy process. Assistance to countries in the implementation of the resolution should therefore be based on constructive dialogue without pressure or interference in the internal affairs of States and without harming legitimate international economic, scientific and technical cooperation.

Effective non-proliferation work is not possible without a broad-based increase in cooperation between the United Nations and specialized international and regional organizations. We feel that, given the experience and knowledge that have been gained, a more active role in the implementation of the resolutions should be played by the export control regimes. Strengthening national export control systems is one of the key components of resolution 1540 (2004), and closer contacts between the Committee established pursuant to that resolution with export control regimes — including by involving the heads of those bodies in regional seminars — should be a priority of the Committee's work.

I wish to report on the efforts Russia is making to assist in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004)

within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). At Russia's initiative, the issue of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is regularly discussed within the CIS Council of Foreign Ministers. We intend to relaunch the work of the CIS Joint Consultative Commission on Disarmament, the draft agenda of which includes items relating to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, enhancing national export control systems, and the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

An intensive dialogue is under way between foreign ministries of the CIS. A tradition has been established of convening consultations in Moscow with CIS States on export control and non-proliferation. There is active cooperation in strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons regime.

In the context of implementing the trilateral initiative of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Russia and the United States of America, we continue to send CIS State missions to assist in providing security and safe storage of radioactive materials. Russia provides technical and methodological assistance to CIS partner States in the area of improving national legislation on the issues of reporting, control and the physical protection of nuclear and radioactive materials. In particular, within the framework of the Russian programme of support for IAEA safeguards, regional workshops are regularly held for CIS States on the use of physical protection systems and their inspection.

We are actively working with the United States of America and IAEA on the removal from CIS States of highly enriched uranium from research reactors manufactured by Russia. To date, processed and unprocessed nuclear fuel has been removed from Uzbekistan.

In order to assist in the implementation of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Russian Federation has offered assistance to a number of CIS States in drafting national implementation laws and an exchange of experience of the work of national bodies established pursuant to those instruments. Together with our CIS partners, we are striving to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention.

We enjoy close cooperation in harmonizing export control systems, particularly within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Community (EURASEC). Together with our partners, we are developing mechanisms for EURASEC States members to implement the Agreement on a Common Order of Export Control, a Russian initiative signed in Moscow on 28 October 2003.

We continue to assist CIS States in enhancing and improving their national export control systems on the transfer of dual-use technologies. We regularly inform our CIS partners on developments in international export control systems of which the Russian Federation is a member, but in which not all CIS States participate. That involves above all explaining changes that have taken place in export control lists and the importance of implementing them at the national level.

In conclusion, I wish to note that the Russian Federation fully shares the views of the joint statement to be made this morning by the Permanent Representative of Belarus, Ambassador Dapkiunas, on behalf of the members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank you, Sir, for holding this open thematic debate, the second such meeting convened by the Security Council under your presidency. It reflects your active and enthusiastic approach to leading the Council.

I also wish to thank my colleague Ambassador Peter Burian, the Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations and Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), for his strenuous efforts at the head of the Committee. We also wish to convey our thanks to Mr. Tanaka, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Pfirter, Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Mr. Zlauvinen , Representative of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and Mr. Schmitz, Director for Compliance and Facilitation of the World Customs Organization, for their participation in today's meeting.

The adoption of resolution 1540 (2004) was a historic landmark in the effort to limit the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which endanger human security, and to achieve the goal of preventing non-State actors from acquiring such weapons and using them in terrorist acts. The adoption of resolution 1540 (2004) was an additional step in the efforts made by the Security Council on this serious issue, especially since the adoption of resolution 1673 (2005). Two years after the adoption of resolution 1540

(2004), which was also the period of the mandate of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to that resolution, the Security Council extended the Committee's mandate for an additional two years by adopting resolution 1673 (2006), thereby reaffirming that it continues to attach importance to the work of the Committee.

The importance of implementing resolution 1540 (2004) is not in question. Nevertheless, three years after it was adopted, almost one third of the Member States of the United Nations have yet to submit to the Committee their reports under the resolution. That is the case despite the efforts of the Committee to promote technical cooperation between States with a view to achieving compliance with the resolution, including the information and outreach activities on which the Committee focuses.

Given that the Committee cannot lend direct assistance to States in implementing the provisions of the resolution, as well as the fact that the submission of reports by States is the first step in achieving the aims of the resolution, we are duty-bound to identify ways and means to help to fulfil those goals and to arm ourselves with all available means to help States in that regard. That would serve to achieve the basic objectives of the resolution, namely, limiting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and preventing non-State actors from acquiring them. Undoubtedly, international organizations concerned with the objectives of resolution 1540 (2004), some representatives of which are participating in this meeting, have the resources to play an effective role in this connection. That is especially the case given that some of those organizations are actually carrying out activities in the areas intended to improve national implementation of the obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and conventions pertaining to nuclear safety and security.

It is a well-known fact that resolution 1673 (2006) called upon the 1540 Committee to explore — together with States and international, regional and subregional organizations — ways of exchanging experiences and lessons learned in the areas covered by resolution 1540 (2004), as well as the availability of programmes to facilitate the implementation of the resolution. This open meeting therefore provides an opportunity for Member States, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the International Atomic Energy Agency and other relevant international organizations to exchange experiences and lessons learned and address possible ways to promote cooperation between international organizations and the Security Council as regards efforts aimed at the comprehensive implementation of the resolution. It is also an opportunity to encourage States to make use of assistance programmes provided by international organizations, including training and counselling for national governmental bodies concerned with the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and assistance in the drafting of the necessary national legislation.

In conclusion, we would like to express our support for the draft presidential statement on cooperation with international organizations in the implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006), which the President's delegation kindly prepared in the course of the consultations it held on the language of the statement. We look forward to its adoption at the conclusion of this meeting.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First of all, the Chinese delegation would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate.

The Chinese delegation believes that preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems is a real and pressing task facing the international community. Non-proliferation is conducive to maintaining international peace and security, in addition to being in the common interests of all countries. China is adamantly opposed to the proliferation of WMD. We support, and actively participate in, relevant international non-proliferation efforts. We welcome the fact that the United Nations is playing its proper role in this area.

China believes that the proliferation of WMD has complex underlying causes that require an integrated approach to address both symptoms and causes. First, it requires the building of a global security environment of cooperation and mutual trust. Secondly, it requires efforts to deal with proliferation through political and diplomatic means. Thirdly, it requires the full participation of the United Nations in its central role, as well as that of other international organizations. Fourthly, it requires proper management of the relationship between non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

In 2004, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation, thereby establishing a Committee whose aim was to fill the gaps in existing international non-proliferation mechanisms in order to cope with illegal WMD proliferation activities by non-State actors. That was of great importance to the deepening of the international consensus on non-proliferation and to the promotion of the non-proliferation process. In April 2006, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1673 (2006), which renewed the Committee's mandate for another two years, thereby laying the groundwork for further comprehensive implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

In the past three years, with the assistance of experts, the Committee has done much work and made steady progress in collecting and reviewing national implementation reports and in carrying out outreach activities and facilitating international assistance and cooperation to promote the effective implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). China appreciates all those efforts.

We have also been pleased to note that the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the World Customs Organization have also – utilizing their resources and expertise – made positive contributions to the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) in their respective areas of responsibility.

It goes without saying that the implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006) is a long-term task for all countries that cannot be accomplished overnight. The implementation of those resolutions depends largely on unflagging national efforts. At the same time, it is important for full and effective implementation of the resolutions that the 1540 Committee play a constructive role in enhancing outreach, promoting international assistance and maintaining the necessary exchanges and cooperation with the relevant international organizations.

China attaches great importance to resolution 1540 (2004) and has always participated constructively and actively in the work of the 1540 Committee. As required by the resolution, China has submitted its national report and supplementary notes. In July 2006, we co-sponsored, with the United Nations and a number of other interested countries, a seminar on implementing Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) in Asia and the Pacific. That formed part of our contribution to promoting the implementation of the resolution in the Asia-Pacific region.

China will, as always, continue to actively support and participate in the work of the Committee and will work with all other actors in a concerted effort to effectively implement resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006). China supports the issuance today of a presidential statement on this item.

Ms. Wolcott Sanders (United States of America): I join others in thanking Under-Secretary-General Tanaka, Director-General Pfirter, Mr. Zlauvinen and Mr. Schmitz for their briefings today. The activities of the international organizations they represent contribute greatly to States' implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006), and we hope that our discussion today strengthens the relationships among us and furthers our collective efforts. We appreciate the opportunity for the Council to focus on promoting implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006) and to highlight its resolve to counter the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, their related materials and their means of delivery.

The threat posed by weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) in the hands of terrorists or rogue States is one of the gravest dangers facing the planet, and in adopting resolution 1540 (2004) the Security Council sent a warning and an ultimatum to the broad range of facilitators of proliferation.

Unfortunately, Iran has yet to heed that warning or make the strategic decision to cooperate with the international community and end its pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability. The report by the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) which the Council received yesterday makes clear that Iran has not complied with Security Council resolution 1737 (2006), thereby highlighting the Iranian regime's continued defiance of the international community. This marks the second time that Iran has failed to comply with a resolution of the Security Council. The report also describes Iran's failure to cooperate fully with the IAEA's investigation and reiterates that, in addition to Iranian cooperation being long overdue, certain Iranian actions are hindering the IAEA's ability to verify the purposes of Iran's nuclear programmes.

That is unacceptable. As resolution 1737 (2006) indicates, the Security Council should be prepared to take additional appropriate measures to communicate to the Iranian regime that its non-compliance is unacceptable and to persuade it to cooperate.

States' actions to implement fully resolution 1540 (2004) form an important part of international efforts to deny terrorists access to weapons of mass destruction and to ensure that States seeking to develop a nuclear or ballistic missile capability in violation of international obligations will not succeed. In that regard, we also recognize and support the efforts of the Security Council and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) to promote States' full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) through the activities set forth in resolution 1673 (2006).

We appreciate the chance to share the experience that the United States has gained in our own implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). For example, consistent with the resolution's requirements concerning proliferation finance, President Bush, in June 2005, issued Executive Order 13382, which establishes a targeted financial sanctions programme that blocks the assets of designated WMD proliferators and their support networks. It also prohibits United States nationals and others within the jurisdiction of the United States from engaging in transactions with those to whom the United States has applied such sanctions. We have created a special 1540 coordinator in the State Department, who works with many relevant agencies on implementation. Last May we completed a national action plan for implementing resolution 1540 (2004).

The United States would like to ensure that 2007 is the year of 1540 implementation. To do that, States must establish clear national priorities and develop national implementation plans, and begin to act upon them. We stand ready to work with other States to identify and share lessons learned and best practices concerning implementation. At last week's 1540 implementation workshop of the Regional Forum of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which the United States co-sponsored along with Canada and Singapore, we were impressed to hear about the many developments that States in that region are pursuing to promote their own implementation. The United States is providing significant assistance to States working to implement resolution 1540 (2004) fully, and we welcome and are prepared to consider additional requests for such assistance.

The 1540 Committee's website lists the assistance that the United States is offering both bilaterally and multilaterally. For example, our export control and related border security programme has budgeted almost $132 million since 2004 for training, equipment and infrastructure development related to 1540 implementation. In 2007, that programme is sponsoring workshops on resolution 1540 (2004) with outreach partners in Oman, Kenya and Tanzania and in the Caribbean and Central and South America. As well as providing funding to the IAEA for its activities to support 1540 implementation, we provide joint training and assistance with the IAEA to IAEA member States. Similarly, the United States and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) have a long-term relationship in providing advice and assistance to enable States parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention to comply with their obligations under that treaty.

Today's debate also highlights the ways in which the Security Council can enhance its cooperation with organizations like the OPCW, the IAEA and the World Customs Organization in promoting 1540 implementation. We urge the Council to urge United Nations Member States which may need assistance with 1540 implementation to avail themselves of the assistance the IAEA and the OPCE provide to strengthen national legal, regulatory and institutional infrastructures related to non-proliferation, nuclear security and chemical weapons. The Council should encourage the 1540 Committee, the IAEA and the OPCW to consider how they might enhance their respective relationships, with a view to identifying activities that could enhance States' fulfilment of their obligations under resolution 1540 (2004).

For the IAEA, activities relating to the nuclear security programme might be particularly appropriate. And for OPCW, cooperation on activities such as technical assistance visits could be especially productive.

I thank you again, Mr. President, for organizing today's debate and for your leadership role on this important issue.

Mr. Okio (Congo) (*spoke in French*): Congo welcomes your initiative, Mr. President, in organizing today's debate on a very important and topical theme.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction continues to pose a threat to humankind, and the risk of their falling into the hands of terrorists remains real. Indeed, as recently as 16 February the General Assembly followed up on the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy; at that meeting Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon presented the first version of the Counter-Terrorism Online Handbook created by the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force.

While noting that United Nations organs can play an important role in this area, he pointed out that the success of counter-terrorism activities depends first and foremost on the role played by Member States, which can be strengthened only through international cooperation.

He also pointed out that collective and concerted action was necessary to prevent terrorism from threatening the very existence of humanity, because, in his view, a race is now on to overcome this destructive phenomenon, whose actors are fully prepared to use the most lethal means available. Those words give today's debate particular importance, as they stress the ongoing nature and persistence of the phenomenon and therefore the need to strengthen and coordinate our actions, in particular to prevent weapons of mass destruction from falling into the hands of terrorists.

In that context, my delegation fully appreciates the considerable amount of work that your delegation has been doing at the helm of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) since January 2006 with respect to Member States as well as to international, regional and subregional organizations. This is clear from the regional seminars held recently on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) at Beijing, Accra and Lima, respectively; the Vienna workshop organized by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; and, more recently, the workshop held by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum, from 12 to 15 February 2007, at San Francisco, to which the American delegation has just referred. Those meetings illustrate the Security Council's will and determination to enhance its cooperation with international organizations. We welcome also the Council's continued focus on civil society organizations through the 1540 Committee.

In paragraph 8 of resolution 1540 (2004), the Security Council calls upon Member States

> "To promote the universal adoption and full implementation, and, where necessary, strengthening of multilateral treaties to which they are parties, whose aim is to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, biological or chemical weapons".

Those States are also asked to renew and fulfil their commitment to multilateral cooperation, in particular within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, as important means of pursuing and achieving their common objectives in the area of non-proliferation and of promoting international cooperation for peaceful purposes.

Along those same lines, the Security Council, in paragraph 5 of resolution 1673 (2006), calls upon the 1540 Committee to intensify its efforts to encourage States fully to implement resolution 1540 (2004) through a work programme which provides for, inter alia, outreach activities, dialogue, assistance and cooperation, particularly on aspects concerning border controls, law enforcement efforts and export and trans-shipment controls, including controls on providing funds and services such as financing to such export and trans-shipment.

These are all areas for concrete action that will enable us to work in a coordinated manner and at all levels — national, regional and international — in order to prevent weapons of mass destruction from falling into the hands of terrorist groups.

However, recent meetings held in Africa, Asia and in other areas of the world have shown that much remains to be done. Not only are reports not being submitted on time by Member States; when they finally are submitted, they do not always meet the requirements of the Committee.

The obstacles we have noted in connection by cooperation by States include not only shortcomings linked to States' performance, but also and, most importantly, the question of the priorities to be assigned in dealing with issues related to threats to international peace and security.

While this may not be the most opportune moment to tackle the issue of small arms and light

weapons, this meeting does provide an opportunity to recall this legitimate concern on the part of those whose very existence is daily threatened by such weapons.

We agree that counter-terrorism is our common mission. However, let us not lose sight of the fact that small arms and light weapons are today the primary means used by terrorists to carry out their crimes. Let us be aware of that fact, despite the fact that, comparatively speaking, their potential for destruction is less than that of chemical, biological or nuclear weapons.

Having said that, Congo fully supports the strengthening of the work of the 1540 Committee and hopes that the donor conference to be held in New York in March 2007 on the implementation of resolution 1540 will be successful.

Once again, Mr. President, we wish you every success in conducting your sensitive mission, and we endorse the draft presidential statement crafted by your delegation.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): Mr. Minister, we thank you once again for presiding over the work of the Council. We in South Africa hope that next month we will be able to achieve as much as your presidency has done.

Let me also welcome the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs; the Director General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons; the Representative of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency; and the Director General of Compliance and Facilitation of the World Customs Organization. We thank them for their briefings.

South Africa welcomes this opportunity to discuss with other Member States issues related to resolution 1540 (2004).

It is South Africa's firm conviction that weapons of mass destruction do not guarantee security, but, rather, detract from it. As long as such weapons exist, the world will always live under the threat of a nuclear catastrophe. Today, we are discussing the fear we all share that such weapons could fall into the wrong hands. However, since weapons of mass destruction are illegitimate and their destructive impact is indiscriminate, South Africa fails to find assurances in a status quo that seems to hold that such weapons are safe in some hands but not in others.

South Africa continues to believe that the objectives of disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing processes that require continuous and irreversible progress on both fronts. We remain convinced that the only real guarantee against the use or threat of use of weapons of mass destruction is their complete elimination and the assurance that they will never again be produced.

The overwhelming majority of States are as concerned about the vertical proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as they are about horizontal proliferation. With regard to horizontal proliferation, we note with grave concern a lack of even-handedness that further undermines efforts to deal effectively and credibly with proliferation issues. As it is, the existing arsenals of weapons of mass destruction are not only retained, but expanded and refined to make them more deployable in a conflict situation, especially when aimed at specific targets, with increased destructive power.

When resolution 1540 (2004) was introduced, it was described by its sponsors as an emergency and temporary stopgap measure designed to close a missing link in the relevant international regimes addressing disarmament and non-proliferation. In other words, the fear was that non-State actors could potentially obtain weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

Since the adoption of resolution 1540 (2004), no credible efforts have been made to close the gap in the international regimes. Instead, the Security Council adopted resolution 1673 (2006), extending the mandate of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) until 27 April 2008.

South Africa is of the view that challenges facing the international community in the area of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems can only be addressed in a balanced and comprehensive manner in the context of existing multilateral instruments. It is only through inclusive multilateralism and the reinvigoration of the relevant multilateral instruments and organizations that we can effectively deal with both old and new challenges in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, including those covered by resolution 1540 (2004).

These international regimes provide a clear recognition of the inextricable link between disarmament and non-proliferation and set out the obligations of nuclear weapons States, while upholding the right of all States to peaceful uses of relevant technologies.

My delegation wishes to highlight the importance of technical assistance and cooperation between Member States and international, regional and sub-regional organizations. This assistance should be provided upon request of a State in a way that respects the sovereignty and national priorities of the State making the request.

We should not lose sight of the fact that the objective of such cooperation is to assist States in meeting their obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions. Ensuring compliance with Security Council resolutions remains a national responsibility that cannot be transferred to international, regional or sub-regional organizations. International organizations and regimes are also not responsible for drawing up action plans and roadmaps for the implementation of Security Council resolutions by Member States.

South Africa reiterates its conviction that in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), structures such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which have already been established in accordance with international disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control agreements, should be utilized as the primary institutions in the international community's endeavours to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including to non-State actors.

South Africa would also be concerned if the Security Council were to assume legislative and treaty-making powers not envisaged by the Charter of the United Nations. South Africa will not accept externally imposed norms or standards, whatever their source, on matters within the jurisdiction of the South African parliament, including national legislation, regulations or arrangements that are not consistent with South Africa's constitutional provisions and procedures, are contrary to South Africa's national interests or infringe on its sovereignty.

Regarding compliance with resolution 1540 (2004), the list of non-reporting and late reporting States consists primarily of developing nations. The Committee's experts report that in addition to lack of capacity and reporting fatigue, one of the reasons offered by States finding themselves on the late or non-reporting list is that they do not have any proliferation-sensitive nuclear, biological or chemical capabilities and that reporting is therefore not considered a priority for them. Rather than assign international organizations the task of policing the implementation of the Security Council's resolutions or taking over the reporting obligations of Member States, we should acknowledge that the resolution 1540 (2004) reporting requirements themselves are overly complicated and unsuitable for many developing States. The reporting obligations ought to be differentiated according to the capabilities of the State in question. Instead of chastising these States for their late or non-reporting status, it is important to acknowledge that none of these States are possessors of weapons of mass destruction.

The 2005 World Summit called on the Security Council to consolidate its anti-terrorism activities and reporting requirements. The overlap between the functions and reporting regimes of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, the Al-Qaeda and Taliban Sanctions Committee and the 1540 Committee needs to be addressed. To avoid duplication, the outreach activities and programmes of those Committees, including their expert support structures, should include joint visits to Member States that could benefit their work.

Bearing this in mind, we welcome the objective of today's discussion, which is to consider ways to harness the synergies that may exist between the work of the 1540 Committee and that of relevant international organizations. We believe this could assist non-reporting States in a manner that respects their sovereignty and also respects the mandates of the relevant international organizations.

In conclusion, the vast majority of States still lend their primary support to cooperative approaches based on treaty-making combined with practical action within relevant international organizations. They see themselves as stakeholders in jointly managed systems of treaties and organizations for disarmament, arms control, verification and the building of security. Their principled renunciation of weapons of mass destruction should be reciprocated by an equal commitment to the disarmament of these weapons. Without honouring this

most fundamental bargain that underpins all of our efforts, significant progress with respect to both disarmament and non-proliferation will continue to elude us.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): France aligns itself with the statement that will be made later on behalf of the European Union by the Permanent Representative of Germany. I should also like to thank you for having taken the initiative to organize this open debate, the first the Council has dedicated to the implementation of that document since the adoption of resolution 1540 (2004) some three years ago.

We believe that the approach that you have chosen for this debate, that is, cooperation between the Security Council and international organizations, is particularly appropriate. The Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), which has now reconstituted its group of experts, must step up its efforts to implement the workplan that it adopted some five months ago. Moreover, it has only 14 months left under resolution 1673 (2006) to report to the Security Council on States' conformity with resolution 1540 (2004) in completing the implementation of the provisions of that resolution. That ambitious task cannot be carried out without enhanced cooperation with other international organizations. The purpose of my statement is to make a few specific suggestions to that end.

First, the Security Council needs to develop its cooperation with international organizations in order to help States to report on the measures that they are undertaking. In that regard, the most useful cooperation concerns regional and subregional organizations. The States that find it difficult to report to the Committee are essentially developing countries in the Pacific, Africa and the Caribbean. The example provided by New Zealand, which has utilized regional and subregional frameworks that link it with Pacific States to help them report to the Committee, is exemplary. The Accra and Lima workshops showed the interest that that example has aroused in other regions.

Such action can go hand in hand with cooperation between organizations: one regional organization can assist the action of another. The statement to be made shortly by the representative of Germany will attest to the experience of the European Union in this area.

However, beyond providing information, the cooperation between the Security Council and international organizations is necessary, and now urgent, to ensure that States adopt appropriate measures. With regard to the implementation of physical protection measures for installations containing sensitive materials, as stipulated in paragraph 3 of resolution 1540 (2004), there are technical competences that we have not utilized to date within the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

We must not mix up competences: the IAEA will not make judgements on States' conformity with the provisions of resolution 1540 (2004). On the other hand, it has elaborated principles and instruments that it can promote to members, such as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. Indeed, these are mentioned in resolution 1540 (2004). In addition, the IAEA has cooperation programmes in the area of security and safety, which provide it with opportunities to raise States' awareness as to whether the security measures they are taking meet the requirements of resolution 1540 (2004). Other organizations could play a similar awareness-raising role. That is the case with the World Customs Organization — whose participation I welcome in this debate — and the World Health Organization. What I said about the IAEA and the OPCW applies to those organizations.

Finally, there are multilateral arrangements whose activities are relevant to non-proliferation, such as the Nuclear Suppliers Group, which has already had contacts with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), or the Missile Technology Control Regime, which will soon meet with the Committee.

There can only be advantages as a result of the involvement of such groups in information activities that reach beyond their membership and raise other States' awareness of their activities as regards export controls. I recall that resolution 1540 (2004) establishes no norm regarding such controls and merely requests States to implement them. The Security Council is not in a position to promote the standards of these groups, but it can encourage them to provide States with ideas about how to implement their own national controls.

In conclusion, I wish to say that cooperation with international organizations aimed at implementing resolution 1540 (2004) should be guided not only by a concern for pragmatism, but also by a certain sense of urgency. Pragmatism can only encourage the Security Council to welcome all the goodwill that is shown and to make use of all competences available. During the nearly three years since it was established, the 1540 Committee has not had substantial cooperation with the IAEA. It is clearly necessary to respect the mandates of the Council and the Agency, but not to the point of never asking for the opinions of those who are in the nuclear profession.

Urgency demands that we accelerate our pace. I am not talking about the urgency resulting from the tight deadline that we have set ourselves for making judgements as to full implementation of the resolution. Rather, I am talking about the urgency of filling the gaps that traffickers and terrorists can still take advantage of in order to procure dangerous materials or contribute to proliferation. France supports the idea of cooperative action to implement resolution 1540 (2004). That must go hand in hand with the Security Council's concern to shoulder its responsibility by effectively addressing the risk to international peace and security posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): I should like to associate myself with the remarks to be made later by Ambassador Matussek on behalf of the European Union.

The United Kingdom would like to place on record our gratitude to Slovakia, which currently holds the Council presidency, for organizing this event. Our position on the importance of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006) is well documented, as is our support for them. We consider them to be vital pieces of the international non-proliferation architecture.

It is crucial that we, as States Members of the United Nations, put in place systems that reduce the threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular filling the gap posed by non-State actors.

The Council has considered the threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to be a threat to international peace and security since 1992. That underpins our continuing concern at developments in Iran and the failure of its Government to meet the obligations set out most recently in resolution 1737 (2006).

The obligations under resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006) are clear. But equally clear is the fact that putting in place all the legislation and systems necessary to protect ourselves against this threat will not happen overnight. To do so, we need to work at all levels: nationally, subregionally, regionally and internationally. We need a coalition of all those who are able to help.

Many areas of the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) relate to the same goals as those of resolution 1540 (2004). They contribute to the global effort to put non-proliferation systems in place. Safeguards agreements and the ratification and implementation of additional protocols are all concrete steps that are necessary in their own right, but they also represent steps towards implementing resolution 1540 (2004). I would put the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material in the same category, and I would encourage all States to ratify the amendments to the Convention as a matter of priority.

These areas of work are ones of great synergy with the work of the Security Council and its Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), not least because international organizations, such as those represented here today — whose briefings we very much welcome — know their members. They know their areas of technical expertise, and they are able, in many cases, to provide technical assistance in a way that the 1540 Committee cannot do.

A fine example of that sort of approach is the successful work undertaken by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), in the form of its action plan on national implementation. In the view of the United Kingdom, that plan has been absolutely key in improving rates of implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Each element of the OPCW's success in its field is a success for the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the contribution of the Director-General. The United Kingdom stands ready, as ever, to continue to support him.

I should also like to mention the biological-weapons aspect of resolution 1540 (2004) and to state,

for the record, how pleased the United Kingdom was with the outcome of the Sixth Review Conference of the Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, held last December. We welcome in particular the creation of an Implementation Support Unit in Geneva, which will help States parties to the Biological Weapons Convention to ensure that they implement their obligations under the Convention. We believe that this small team can become a focal point where States can exchange best practices on implementation. And — important in the context of today's meeting — we think that team can function as a clearing house for States to offer and to request assistance, bringing requests and providers together, which is very important.

I would also like to welcome the World Customs Organization (WCO) joining up the work of policymakers with the customs officers — who are engaged on the front line, often taking crucial decisions on whether to stop a shipment or whether to allow it. Invariably, it is those experts who know best how to detect and who are most successful at doing it. The United Kingdom wholly endorses the WCO Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade, known as the SAFE Framework. A secure supply chain is one from which goods will not and cannot be diverted to non-State-actor use.

The United Kingdom has continued to support implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006) through our own participation in international forums. Promoting discussion between States that can share experience and that have similar national situations can be a very powerful instrument. Such occasions, when set up with clear objectives and focused follow-up, are an important opportunity to map the way forward on implementation. The participation of international organizations and the opportunity to benefit from their expertise is also a real gain at such events.

We found the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) workshop held in November last year useful for exactly the reasons I have tried to set out. As a result of that meeting, the OSCE and its members made a strong commitment to implementing the resolutions, among other things by developing national action plans for that implementation. Action plans can be a useful tool for States as they consider the top few priorities for their next steps on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and a useful tool enabling those in the international community that can provide assistance to see where priorities lie and where assistance needs are greatest.

In conclusion, I would like to make clear that nothing in today's debate is intended to divert or alter the mandates of the international organizations working in the non-proliferation field. The clear message of today's meeting is that we share the goal of protecting the international community from the potentially catastrophic results of the proliferation of WMDs, specifically the ultimate nightmare of bringing together weapons of mass destruction and terrorists. That is why we should work together to reinforce that international effort and to make the best use of our respective resources. Not to cooperate would be wasteful and short-sighted. But to really put our hearts into productive cooperation: now, that could make a massive difference.

Mr. Voto-Bernales (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me, Sir, to congratulate you and your delegation on having convened today's meeting on an issue of great relevance and international interest: cooperation between the Security Council and international organizations in the implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006).

The adoption of resolution 1540 (2004) was a milestone in the area of non-proliferation. The national reports submitted to the Committee established pursuant to that resolution demonstrate the commitment of States to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and related materials and reflect their efforts to ensure that those weapons are kept out of the hands of non-State actors.

In extending the mandate of the 1540 Committee, resolution 1673 (2006) showed that some States that submitted their reports still have gaps in their legislation and deficiencies in implementation. Renewed efforts are therefore required to achieve the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). Here, I would like to commend Ambassador Peter Burian for his work as Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

My delegation is fully aware of the difficulties that many States face in the submitting of their reports or in the establishment of appropriate legislative and operational measures. The Committee should therefore

maintain its full support towards the achievement of those objectives. Countries with more experience and capacity to provide assistance should also support that task.

That situation gave rise to intensified promotion of the implementation of the resolution through the organization of a number of regional seminars. In November 2006, as an example of its commitment to the issue of weapons of mass destruction, Peru hosted one of the events for Latin American and Caribbean countries. The seminar was co-sponsored by the European Union and the Government of Spain and was supported by the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs through the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, headquartered in Lima. Because of the results obtained in terms of shared experiences and assistance, we recommend such activities. The participation of subregional and regional organizations is highly appreciated.

Allow me to note the progress made in cooperation between the 1540 Committee and international organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). My delegation welcomes the assistance that those and other organizations can provide in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) within their respective mandates. Such support should, however, be provided on a case-by-case basis. We are confident that the work of the 1540 Committee and the cooperation of international, regional and subregional organizations will contribute to guide and motivate States in strengthening their non-proliferation processes.

Finally, I would like to reiterate our conviction that non-proliferation initiatives, which are fully supported by my Government, should be associated with effective action on disarmament issues. Progress in both areas is required if we truly intend to build a safer world and to reduce the proliferation of conventional threats.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Belgium welcomes the organization of today's open debate. We welcome, Mr. President, your country's contribution to the efforts of the international community in that area. Belgium supports the statement to be made shortly by our colleague from Germany on behalf of the European Union.

After the adoption of the fifth programme of work by the 1540 Committee, today's debate will enable us to take stock of one of the principal elements of the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction: the need to enhance cooperation and optimize coordination among the various international organizations that are active in this area. Indeed, the action of international organizations in this area is an extension of the obligation of each of our States to establish effective export control mechanisms to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Resolution 1540 (2004) was the first formal Security Council decision that described proliferation as a threat to international peace and security. While the resolution reaffirmed support for existing multilateral instruments, it also established new obligations addressing nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery and, in particular, covering non-State actors.

While numerous States have submitted their national reports on the implementation of the resolution to the 1540 Committee, many others have not yet reached that point. Moreover, the submission of a report does not automatically mean that all obligations under the resolution have been fulfilled. The resolution has launched a process. Its implementation is a long-term task and will required sustained effort.

Belgium is determined to provide its support to those countries facing difficulties in establishing the necessary administrative and legislative arsenals for the implementation of the resolution. Like many others, Belgium has worked with the various international organizations of which it is a member to ensure convergence among the actions of those organizations by drawing on the respective lessons learned, which would seem to be a clear necessity. Ensuring that optimal use is made of the specific skills of each organization remains a challenge that we must continuously and repeatedly seek to meet.

The European Union's strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction stresses the collective responsibility of States to combat proliferation. The European Union has taken numerous steps to encourage the submission of national reports,

holds regional seminars on the implementation of the resolution, and supports the International Atomic Energy Agency's assistance and cooperation programmes and various projects to implement the Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions.

Finally, Belgium also wishes to recall the utility of building bridges between the various export control regimes whose expertise, experience and know-how can be useful. While the autonomy of each instrument must be respected, mutual reinforcement among the various conventions and regimes could expedite progress towards establishing effective national legal systems.

Nana Effah-Apenteng (Ghana): At the outset, let me congratulate you, Sir, for organizing this debate, considering the importance of the issue to the core mandate of the Security Council, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security.

Let me also thank Under-Secretary-General Tanaka for his presentation and the representatives of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the World Customs Organization (WCO) for their briefings.

Although the international community's resolve to overcome the twin scourge of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction has yielded some modest results, it has failed to assuage concerns over that foremost threat to global peace and security. The fear of terrorists' acquiring and using weapons of mass destruction has become more serious given the current growing interest in civilian nuclear programmes.

It is against that backdrop that my delegation considers resolution 1540 (2004) to be a landmark document that addresses a formidable challenge to global security in the twenty-first century. Although it is not a panacea for containing weapons of mass destruction proliferation, the resolution seeks to close a critical gap by preventing the acquisition of such weapons by non-State actors.

The maximum gains that resolution 1540 (2004) seeks to achieve can be realized only through adherence to and implementation of its provisions. Three years since its inception, the Committee established pursuant to the resolution has made significant strides in the discharge of its onerous responsibility. Through its outreach programmes and participation in workshops and seminars, it has sensitized the international community, increased awareness of the importance of the resolution, and encouraged and assisted countries to fulfil their obligations. The Committee's efforts have yielded positive dividends, with about 135 countries having submitted their first reports and 85 identified as providing additional information. While we welcome that positive development, we should be mindful of the fact that the resolution enjoys universal support and was adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter, which obliges all Member States to comply faithfully and fully with its provisions. Thus, nothing short of universal adherence is expected and acceptable.

Having successfully endorsed an elaborate work programme, we hold the view that 2007 should be a year of implementation if we are to make substantial progress. Given the tremendous efforts still required, it is vital that the Committee adopt strategies that would enhance efforts towards fulfilling its mandate.

As the Committee pursues efforts to ensure the submission of first reports by all Member States, it is our candid view that equal attention should be focused on implementation, since resolution 1540 (2004) is also suffering from an implementation deficit within and between countries. After all, the crux of the resolution is for States to ensure that adequate measures have been instituted to address the threat of non-State actors' acquiring and using weapons of mass destruction. If we do not focus our attention on its implementation, the resolution may remain a mere declaration as States make minimal efforts at compliance, while achieving little improvements in global control over the proliferation of the world's most heinous weapons. We will, however, be the first to admit that, given the gamut of control elements within resolution 1540 (2004) and the disparate resources among countries, even a satisfactory universal level of implementation will take years, if not decades, to accomplish.

The ideal of international control over the spread of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors requires a strategy that would counter the current challenges in order to remove the limitations to universality. The resolution recognized that reality and provided tools that should be used effectively for that purpose, such as the provision of assistance to less endowed States. It is my delegation's strong view,

however, that despite its tireless efforts, the 1540 Committee with its current mandate lacks the capacity to provide the requisite assistance needed to attain the long-term lofty goal of full implementation of all the provisions of the resolution by all States. It would need the support of relevant international and regional organizations that have the technical expertise in that sphere, such as IAEA, OPCW and WCO. The resolution recognized that crucial factor when it called, among other things, for the intensification of cooperation with international and regional organizations on the issue. We are therefore pleased to note that, in the Committee's new work programme, priority has been placed on that relationship.

The Committee's role as a clearing house for assistance has grave limitations that should be addressed through active partnership with IAEA, since the latter also provides assistance to States on the prevention of nuclear materials and related technologies falling into the hands of non-State actors and offers legal and technical advice to States on adherence to and implementation of international instruments relevant to enhancing protection against nuclear terrorism. Again, not only has its safeguards regime provided a degree of security in itself, but its efforts to address safety and security — especially security measures put in place under the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material — have enhanced control over nuclear materials and facilities. Moreover, the Agency is considering offering legislative assistance to support States in their development of a comprehensive nuclear law governing a range of control measures, including nuclear safeguards and physical protection, a cardinal obligation under resolution 1540 (2004).

It is also imperative that the current relationship with OPCW be strengthened within the realm of chemical weapons aspects under resolution 1540 (2004). The organization has a wealth of experience and expertise which could be of tremendous assistance to the Committee and the implementation of the resolution. IAEA and OPCW could also assist in ascertaining the implementation of obligations by States during field visits by its experts to countries.

In the same vein, the 1540 Committee could also benefit from the useful information and expertise of the World Customs Organization regarding good customs practices, dual-use goods, labelling requirements, and how best to accomplish non-proliferation goals without disrupting global trade.

My delegation also welcomes the recognition by the Committee of the need to forge close partnerships with regional organizations, such as the European Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Caribbean Community, the Organization of American States, the League of Arab States and the African Union. Those institutions have the appropriate mechanisms for the pooling of resources for the implementation of such obligations under resolution 1540 (2004) as border controls and illicit financial networks within the regional context. Given their respective characteristics, they are able to develop more effective and contextually-driven means to fulfil the obligations of resolution 1540 (2004), rather than simply transplanting measures from States with different values and cultures. Moreover, such bodies can place the fulfilment of the resolution on the regional agenda and thereby promote its universal adherence by all States in the region. While we support the current engagement with some of those bodies, we call on the Committee to extend such partnerships to other regional groups.

Finally, the coming months will be critical for the Committee, since its report to the Council at the end of its mandate will determine whether its efforts meet the general expectations of the international community. However, its success will also be a reflection of the commitment of Member States to abide by their obligations. We should work together collectively to keep the world's most dangerous weapons from the hands of the most dangerous individuals and groups. That is a challenge we must strive to overcome if we are to save humankind from a catastrophe of unprecedented and unimaginable magnitude.

Finally, we support the draft presidential statement that the President's delegation has kindly prepared.

Mr. Jenie (Indonesia): At the outset, on behalf of my delegation, I would like to extend our appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate. My delegation also appreciates the presence of Mr. Tanaka, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, as well as that of the high-level representatives of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the World Customs Organization.

It is a fact the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery is very real. That threat is magnified by the fact that WMD could fall into the hands of non-State actors, including terrorist groups. The continued existence of such weapons could contribute to the illicit acquisition of, and trafficking in, WMD.

The adoption of resolution 1540 (2004) took place against the backdrop of the fact that previous WMD treaty regimes lacked universality and had been designed to deal only with State entities. They were therefore seen by some as ineffective in tackling the challenge posed by non-State actors. The mission of resolution 1540 (2004) was therefore to address that gap. As reflected its paragraphs 5 and 8, resolution 1540 (2004) was intended only to complement and reinforce, rather than replace or subvert, multilaterally negotiated treaties.

We are reminded that, during the process of the adoption of resolution 1540 (2004), concerns were expressed that the Security Council had taken on a legislative role through which it dictated domestic law to Member States and enforced non-proliferation obligations outside the traditional multilateral negotiating process. We must therefore work towards establishing a multilaterally negotiated international legal instrument that will permanently address the gap being temporarily filled by the resolution.

One of the key challenges before us pertains to the ability of Member States to fulfil the central provisions of the resolution, for which national legislation may need to be enacted and enforcement measures put in place. For the majority of States, a certain degree of technical and legal expertise is also required, as is capacity in general. With reference to that point, it must also be borne in mind that a State's capacity to meet its obligations is not just a matter of overall State capability, but also one of national priority. For almost three years, the focus of the Committee has mainly been on encouraging the reporting requirement. While noting that reporting is indeed important, as it provides a baseline for analysis, it is not the objective of the resolution. The key point is the implementation of the provisions of the resolution.

For developing countries with limited resources and many other equally pressing priorities, the increasing burden of reporting in its various forms can be overwhelming. It is therefore timely for the Committee to focus more on the implementation phase. Cooperation between the Council and its Committee with specialized international organizations should be framed within the context of assisting States to build their capacity to implement their obligations in a sustainable manner.

The problems associated with implementation lie at the national level. In most cases, those problems derive from technical difficulties faced by Member States. The Committee should therefore focus on programmes that enhance the national capabilities of such countries, in collaboration with existing international organizations in the field of the prohibition of WMD.

The full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) is a long-term objective and an ongoing process. It will require continuous efforts, patience, dialogue, cooperation and assistance. As a result, it is our belief that sustained international cooperation is essential to achieve the objectives and purposes of resolution 1540 (2004).

The Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), which is tasked with ensuring the implementation of the resolution, is well placed to mobilize and coordinate an effective non-proliferation effort by garnering the support and assistance of various specialized international organizations in the execution of its mandate. While there are currently no substantive partnerships between those organizations and the Committee, this possibility could be explored in the future.

In that regard, the Security Council and the Committee should optimize the comparative advantages of specialized international organizations. That partnership should strengthen practical cooperation, avoid duplication, promote cost effectiveness, strengthen synergy of efforts and increase the effective use of resources and expertise.

In the areas of nuclear weapons, chemical weapons and their related materials, the Committee should continue its cooperation with the secretariats of the IAEA and the OPCW. Both organizations have, within their respective fields and mandates, programmes for State capacity-building that are directly relevant to resolution 1540 (2004). For instance, they maintain records of the status of the national implementation measures of States parties to their respective regimes. It is regrettable, however, that

in the area of the control of dangerous biological agents we do not have similar organizations, since there is not yet agreement on a verification regime for the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC).

For our part, in implementing obligations under resolution 1540 (2004), Indonesia continues to strengthen its national implementation measures, including its national legislation and enhanced cooperation, both bilateral and multilateral. We are also working closely with international organizations such as the IAEA and the OPCW. Together with the OPCW, Indonesia last year held meetings of national authorities in Asia. Bilaterally, Indonesia and the OPCW have undertaken a series of training exercises on our emergency response system in the event of the intentional or accidental release of dangerous chemical agents. In addition, Indonesia continues to cooperate with the IAEA in the field of nuclear safety and security safeguards. In the absence of an international verification regime for the BWC, Indonesia and Australia have conducted annual regional workshops, with a view to strengthen regional cooperation and an exchange of best practices in implementing the provisions of BWC.

Finally, as we pursue the non-proliferation initiative, we should not lose sight of the question of disarmament. It is our conviction that, in the end, the only guarantee for eliminating the fear caused by the possible use or threat of use of WMD is their total elimination, because that is the only sure way of preventing non-State actors from acquiring them. We therefore reiterate our call on all States to work towards that fundamental goal.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to join those who have preceded me in congratulating you and your delegation, Mr. President, on Slovakia's skilful leadership of the Security Council during the month of February. That skill is evident in today's timely convocation of this open debate on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). The delegation of Slovakia has led the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) with marked success. I am also grateful for the presence and participation of our invited guests.

Last year the Security Council took a significant step towards meeting its commitment to maintain international peace and security by extending the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) for a further two years, thus acknowledging that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction poses a significant threat to peace and security. The Council thereby gave operational impetus to provisions relating to State implementation of non-proliferation obligations previously set out in an array of legal instruments on non-proliferation and at conferences on the matter, which additionally called for intensive cooperation among their respective States parties.

Panama, whose economic development depends on the smooth flow of international trade, considers that, in the present international context of globalization, international peace and security is indivisible: an attack against one nation is an attack against all. Cooperation is therefore crucial for the success of resolution 1540 (2004).

The implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) has given rise to a process of interaction between the Security Council and Member States, which are obliged to report to the Council on their compliance with the provisions of the resolution. From our viewpoint, there is one especially problematical area here: among the requirements of the resolution is the establishment of national export controls over dual-use materials, substances, equipment and technologies. That poses a challenge to State institutions not designed to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

We take note of the efforts that must be made by small countries seeking to do their collective duty but lacking sufficient institutional, material or human resources to do so expeditiously. We therefore appreciate the assistance that the Committee provides to States indirectly, through its expert groups, in formulating and adopting national legislation to that end. In particular, we welcome the idea of convening outreach seminars on these and related issues, jointly with regional organizations. Such cooperation should continue and should be enhanced; it will create new synergy between the United Nations and other multilateral actors, which, each within its own area of responsibility, can contribute to this common undertaking.

I cannot fail today to join other members in touching on another aspect of non-proliferation. In our era of globalization, it is artificial and dangerous to compartmentalize threats. Panama is among the vast

majority of States that has never even considered the option of developing or acquiring weapons of mass destruction; that would have run counter to our priority of promoting national development in a context of peace, security and the rule of law. Indeed, Panama is a demilitarized State, having dismantled its army in conformity with a constitutional mandate.

But all countries suffer from the scourge of the production, illicit trade and proliferation of small arms and light weapons. As former Secretary-General Kofi Annan said, while some view terrorism and weapons of mass destruction as the main threat to world peace, others consider that they face the immediate threat of small arms, used in internal conflicts. An effective multilateral response to the threat to peace posed by small arms and light weapons continues to be needed.

Mr. Mantovani (Italy): Allow me at the outset to express my deep appreciation for the timely opportunity that this open debate offers to discuss the role of international organizations in fostering the implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006).

The importance for international peace and security of preventing non-State actors from gaining access to weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their means of delivery and related materials has been so widely recognized that it needs no further explanation. In line with the 2003 European Union (EU) Strategy on WMD non-proliferation, Italy is on the forefront in combating the threat that terrorist organizations might acquire those deadly weapons, and it lends its convinced support to resolution 1540 (2004). It is worth recalling that in June 2006 the EU granted €195,000 to promote the implementation of the resolution in the Asia-Pacific region, in Africa and in Latin America and the Caribbean. The latter was again included among EU non-proliferation priorities for 2007 to 2009. I shall leave it to the European Union presidency, with whose remarks Italy fully aligns itself, to elaborate on cooperation between the Security Council and the European Union in this field.

Three years after the adoption of resolution 1540 (2004), the danger of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction has not yet been overcome, and several States face difficulties in putting in place the required legislative and technical provisions. Indeed, the response to the complex nature of proliferation challenges has to be comprehensive and must encompass, inter alia, safety and security of dual-use items, effective export and border controls and interdiction of illicit trafficking and brokering in these items.

Against that background, we must make full use of the expertise of international organizations operating in the nuclear, chemical, biological and missile-related sectors. They can provide the assistance States may need. To that end, consistent with provisions of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006), a network of multilateral cooperation has to be envisaged. The Security Council and its Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) — which you, Mr. President, so effectively lead — can act as a catalyst.

We believe that the present discussion should be institutionalized and made operational. The 1540 Committee should foresee, as it is starting to do, periodic meetings, in the form of thematic debates duly prepared in advance, with relevant international organizations in order to develop synergies, pool resources and facilitate the matching of assistance requests from States with cooperation programmes available in the portfolios of international institutions.

While we welcome the presentations made earlier by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the World Customs Organization, we deem it necessary to involve other international organizations active in areas within the scope of resolution 1540 (2004). In particular, attention should be paid to the physical protection and safe handling of biological pathogens, the strengthening of national mechanisms overseeing transfers of sensitive dual-use items and the enhancement of law-enforcement efforts to disrupt illicit networks used to finance proliferation.

Questions of substance often come together with procedural issues. We therefore believe it might be useful for the 1540 Committee to agree on a calendar of meetings with relevant international organizations and to build with them a list of points of contact in charge of assistance programmes.

In conclusion, let me once again stress that in the common endeavour to promote full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) the Security Council and the membership can rely on Italy's firm commitment and steadfast support.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Slovakia.

Slovakia aligns itself with the statement to be made shortly by the Permanent Representative of Germany on behalf of the European Union. That is why I shall limit my statement to the following comments.

My delegation is pleased to note that there is growing awareness of the importance of resolution 1540 (2004) for global and regional security and for the national security of United Nations Member States. Since the adoption of that resolution, significant progress has been achieved in the implementation of its provisions in various regions. At the same time, we recognize that there are still many challenges to be addressed in achieving the full implementation of all aspects of resolution 1540 (2004) worldwide.

My delegation notes with satisfaction that through the support of individual Member States, donors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international and regional organizations, the Security Council has succeeded in creating a strong momentum in the implementation process, which must now be utilized for the strengthening of a global response, through further practical measures, to the threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

Thus, while the year 2006 was dominated by efforts to increase awareness of the significance of resolution 1540 (2004), we strongly believe that this year the Security Council must concentrate on ensuring that further progress is made in the implementation of all aspects of resolution 1540 (2004) and resolution 1673 (2006) and in facilitating cooperation and the exchange of information on national experiences and best practices in addressing the requirements of resolution 1540 (2004), including with respect to further actions needed from States and on technical assistance needed and offered.

My delegation is convinced that outreach activities must be sustained by a sound strategy on assistance that has to be developed and implemented in the long run. Technical assistance is one of the dominant issues in the context of the interaction of the Security Council Committee with States Members of the United Nations.

Slovakia wishes to stress that broad-based cooperation with States and international and regional organizations in capacity-building and assistance is critical to effectively addressing this issue. Here we believe that the contribution of international, regional and subregional organizations and arrangements relevant to such efforts can make a real difference in advancing the implementation process.

For those reasons, Slovakia is grateful to the Governments of Germany and of Norway for having organized, along with the Security Council, a donor States' workshop on the assistance provided for the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), to be held in April this year in New York.

My delegation fully appreciates the offers of assistance provided directly by several international organizations and arrangements and recognizes that other such bodies provide assistance of significant relevance to the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). Since this is the Security Council's first opportunity to meet with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the World Customs Organization since it decided to extend the mandate of the 1540 Committee in April 2006, we wish to thank those bodies for the detailed updates on their activities in connection with the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

We would like to underline the fact that legislative measures to counter proliferation remain primarily the responsibility of the States Members of the United Nations, and that, ultimately, the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) is a national function and responsibility. Slovakia therefore considers that the importance of national ownership of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) might be best reflected in national action plans or road maps to achieve such full implementation. We are of the view that national plans of action would not only help to better prioritize the steps leading to the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), but could also help to identify, for donor countries and countries providing technical assistance, those areas in which assistance is needed or requested.

Before concluding, I wish to stress the importance that my country attaches to the need for a comprehensive and systematic approach to the implementation of all aspects and requirements of resolution 1540 (2004). We believe that such an approach can provide for an adequate system of

protection and prevention of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction at the national and global levels.

Last but not least, I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to all members of the Security Council for their contributions and active participation in the preparation of the text of the presidential statement affirming our determination to promote increased multilateral cooperation towards the full implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006).

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

The next speaker is the representative of Germany, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Matussek (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this declaration.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, such as ballistic missiles, is a growing threat to international peace and security. While international treaty regimes and export-control arrangements have slowed the spread of such weapons and their delivery systems, a number of States have sought or are seeking to develop such weapons. The risk of terrorists' acquiring chemical, biological, radiological or fissile materials and their means of delivery adds a critical new dimension to that threat.

Meeting this challenge, therefore, is a central element of the EU's external action. Our objective is to prevent, deter, halt and, where possible, eliminate proliferation programmes of concern worldwide. Non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control can make an essential contribution to the global fight against terrorism by reducing the risk of non-State actors gaining access to weapons of mass destruction, radioactive materials and means of delivery.

It is against this backdrop in particular that the European Union fully acknowledges the relevance of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) as an important international instrument. It is the first to be adopted by the Council to deal with such weapons, their means of delivery and related materials in an integrated and comprehensive manner.

The EU is determined to give full support to the Security Council and to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) in their endeavour to achieve the broadest possible implementation of the resolution's requirements.

The European Union fully recognizes the tireless efforts of the Committee established under this resolution to provide guidance to States on preparing and submitting national reports and fully implementing their obligations under resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006). Let me indicate that the Committee, in doing so, should also bear in mind its particular responsibility to States in need of assistance.

We are fully aware that the Committee's capacities are not unlimited and that additional guidance and assistance is necessary. It can be provided by States but also by international organizations. The EU greatly appreciates the important work in support of national implementation that has been undertaken by a number of international organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. The EU also acknowledges the commitment of other international organizations to supporting the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) through appropriate activities within their respective areas of responsibility. Furthermore, the support and the useful contributions made by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to the implementation of the resolution are appreciated.

Nor does the European Union ignore the danger posed by weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and related materials. That is why, as early as December 2003, it endorsed the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. That non-proliferation strategy creates a comprehensive and cogent basis for joint action by the EU member States. It constitutes a central element of the EU's external action. It is first and foremost within that framework and on the basis of that Strategy that the EU engages in the effective and comprehensive implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), which is one of the focal points of its non-proliferation policy. The EU Strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and

their means of delivery rests on three pillars: rendering multilateralism and its instruments more effective; promoting a stable international and regional environment; and cooperating closely with key partners.

The Strategy aims at strengthening identification, control and interception of illegal trafficking in weapons of mass destruction. It also suggests a programme of assistance to States in need of technical knowledge in the field of export control. Both are core issues addressed by resolution 1540 (2004).

Every year the European Union adopts a list of priorities for the implementation of its non-proliferation Strategy. Support for the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) figures prominently among the EU's policy priorities. That is why in 2005 the resolution was added to the list. But even before that time the EU had undertaken a number of activities, which it is still engaged in, aimed at strengthening national export control systems where assistance is required. The EU substantial legislative corpus in the area of export controls and the lessons learned and best practices identified during a peer review give the European Union a solid background that enables it to support third countries in the development of effective export controls.

In 2006, the European Union and member States held numerous seminars and meetings providing export control training and assistance to States in need of technical knowledge, similar to the one recently held in San Francisco within the framework of the Regional Forum of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. In addition, cooperation and assistance programmes under the 2005 Pilot Project Programme of the European Commission, implemented by Germany's export control agency with the assistance of national experts from EU member States, were advanced in several countries. All these measures, as well as many others I shall not mention here, contribute to assisting in the effective implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

Finally, in 2006, the EU co-sponsored and, together with United Nations Department of Disarmament Affairs, co-financed three regional seminars through a joint action by all European Union member States to support the regional implementation of the resolution. The seminars took place in regions where countries had the greatest difficulties implementing the resolution. The seminars were aimed at raising awareness of its requirements, in particular the obligation to submit national reports on implementation and to adopt relevant legislation and other measures.

The seminars yielded very concrete and comprehensive recommendations with regard to follow-up and pinpointed the real need for assistance. We consider the seminars to have been of particular help in identifying further assistance needs, because the countries actually in need participated in the workshops. The recommendations are a result of their discussion and of their input. The European Union will listen to their voices.

In assisting with the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) in third countries, the EU will continue to cooperate and coordinate closely with the stakeholder Governments involved. Their involvement and participation in identifying the assistance needed is an important precondition for the success and sustainability of any measure taken. But the European Union will also cooperate closely with the 1540 Committee. It is the focal point for the implementation of the resolution. Any action taken should, therefore, be closely coordinated with the Committee in order to avoid redundancies.

Let me conclude by reiterating that the European Union remains committed to the full implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006). However, our work on resolution 1540 (2004)is far from finished. We have a vision of how the world should look once that resolution is fully implemented. But that is still a long way off.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Cuba.

Mr. Malmierca Díaz (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to commend you, Sir, for your work as President of the Security Council during the month of February. I also take the opportunity to convey my delegation's appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, to the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and to the representatives of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Customs Organization for the valuable information that they have provided today.

Cuba strongly supports general and complete disarmament under strict international control and in particular supports the complete elimination of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, recognizing the danger that their very existence poses for humanity.

Cuba does not possess, nor has it any intention of possessing, weapons of mass destruction of any kind. In our country, all programmes related to the nuclear, chemical or biological spheres have always been exclusively peaceful in nature. They are under the permanent and strict control of our national authorities and are monitored by the relevant international agencies.

We have an effective, predictable and reliable system in place for implementing our international obligations at the national level as a State party to the Biological Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Cuba has repeatedly expressed concerns regarding the scope and implications of resolution 1540 (2004) and, hence, resolution 1673 (2006). Let us recall that due to the pressure exerted by certain members of the Security Council, resolution 1540 (2004) included some deliberately ambiguous provisions so that some States could claim that, through its adoption, the actions promoted within the framework of the so-called Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) had supposedly been rendered legitimate by the Council. Cuba considers that under the PSI, unilateral actions could be carried out that would clearly contravene key provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982, such as the right of innocent passage of ships and the legal regime governing the high seas contained in that Convention.

We reiterate our rejection of any manipulation or arbitrary interpretation of resolution 1540 (2004) aimed at using it as a pre-authorization or justification for the unilateral use of force against certain non-State actors or even against States where the non-State actors may be located. This is particularly disturbing in the context of the accusations levelled by certain permanent members of the Security Council against some countries for supposedly developing weapons of mass destruction programmes.

While noting the adoption of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006), the Non-Aligned Movement Summit held in Havana in September 2006 underlined the need to ensure that any action of the Security Council does not undermine the United Nations Charter and existing multilateral agreements on weapons of mass destruction and international organizations established in that regard, or the role of the General Assembly. Moreover, the heads of State or Government of the countries members of the Movement warned against the Security Council's continued practice of using its authority to define the legislative requirements that Member States must meet in implementing its decisions, as is the case with resolution 1540 (2004). The Non-Aligned Movement has stressed that it is essential that the General Assembly address in an inclusive manner the issue of the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors, taking into account the views of all Member States.

Cuba believes that the Security Council is by no means the most appropriate organ to lead the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in all its aspects. That is not only for the obvious reason that the five nuclear-weapon States recognized by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons have the veto power in that organ. Even more important, certain permanent Council members are adamantly opposed to moving forward with a multilateral negotiation process to attain the objective of nuclear disarmament.

Cuba shares the concern about the risk of links between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. We fully support all legitimate international efforts to prevent the acquisition by terrorists of such weapons and their means of delivery. Cuba unequivocally condemns all acts, methods and practices of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever and by whomsoever committed and regardless of their motivations. Our country also condemns all acts or actions — regardless of who their instigators or perpetrators might be — aimed at encouraging, supporting, financing or concealing any terrorist act, method or practice.

Having been a direct target of terrorism ever since the triumph of the revolution, the Cuban people

have experienced firsthand the terrible consequences of terrorist acts. Nevertheless, the threat of the use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists cannot be addressed through a selective and discriminatory approach that is limited to combating horizontal proliferation and disregards vertical proliferation and disarmament. The prohibition and total elimination of weapons of mass destruction are the only guarantee that such weapons will not proliferate and will not, inter alia, fall into the hands of terrorists.

If the Security Council really wants to contribute to effectively combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in all its aspects, it could adopt in the near future a resolution committing all its members — particularly its permanent members — to take immediate steps towards the achievement of nuclear disarmament under strict international control and within a given time frame.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasize that our country — as it has done thus far, despite the concerns expressed — will continue to abide strictly by the provisions of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006). Indeed, Cuba has submitted to the Security Council, within the established time frame and in great detail, the reports required under resolution 1540 (2004).

Our country reaffirms its willingness to contribute in every way possible to the achievement of genuine international cooperation, within the framework of the United Nations and the relevant international treaties, in order to address the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in all its aspects and to attain the objective of the prohibition and complete elimination of such weapons from the face of the Earth.

The President: I now call on the representative of Belarus.

Mr. Dapkiunas (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the member States of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), namely, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

We thank the Slovak presidency for holding an open meeting of the Security Council on the implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006). We are confident that this debate will help to improve the exchange of information among countries and international organizations and give a new impetus to cooperation aimed at facilitating the implementation of the Council's resolutions. The Council's openness and responsiveness to the opinions of Member States and international organizations will help to make the implementation of Council measures related to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction more effective and results-oriented.

The success of collective efforts is directly linked to the effectiveness of action taken at the national level. Non-proliferation measures, such as those aimed at the physical protection of sensitive materials and at border controls, are regarded by States as important means to ensure their own security.

We consider international export control regimes to be useful. The strategy of further improving national export control systems is elaborated within the framework of such regimes. It is clear that much remains to be done to make these mechanisms clear and transparent for the international community as a whole. Better understanding of how and why certain goods get onto control lists could help some countries address their concerns about the discriminatory trade barriers allegedly created by these regimes.

Regional organizations that operate on the basis of common interests, trust and cooperation can play a positive role in eliminating concerns about the allegedly discriminatory nature of measures used by the international regimes. Regional organizations can offer practical assistance to States in elaborating effective national non-proliferation policies, including with regard to the implementation of Security Council resolutions. Such cooperation could take place in the form of information exchange; consulting; the elaboration of general principles for non-proliferation policies; and joint practical actions, from the elaboration of legal norms to the monitoring of their implementation.

A significant number of regional events, including those held in collaboration with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), attests to States' interest in cooperation within regional organizations on non-proliferation issues. One such event, held recently in the CSTO area, was a regional workshop for the States of Central Asia and the Caucasus on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). It was held by the Monterey Institute of

International Studies and the Government of Kazakhstan in Almaty in October 2006.

The member States of CSTO cooperate on non-proliferation issues in various formats: bilaterally, within economic integration unions and with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and other entities. Four Central Asian CSTO member States are parties to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia. The Treaty is an important practical contribution to the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. It also contributes to the implementation of the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and to the control of nuclear materials. The membership of States in various regional and international organizations is an important element promoting effective coordination and a results-oriented approach in their non-proliferation efforts.

Economic integration unions play an important role in the harmonization of export control legislation. Six out of seven CSTO members are engaged in such efforts within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Community. Standardized export control lists have already been drawn up, and the process of making national legislation uniform is currently under way.

The CSTO defines its role in the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the region taking into account the military and political nature of its activities. The principal areas of practical cooperation approved within the CSTO include the establishment of a mechanism for regular consultations, joint assessment of the degree of threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, assessing the vulnerability of sea, air and land shipments, and networking to ensure effective cooperation among the relevant agencies of CSTO member States.

CSTO member States believe that new forms of cooperation to ensure the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction should complement and strengthen the methods of work already utilized by the international community within the framework of current non-proliferation regimes and international institutions. Those new forms of cooperation should not be an obstacle to international cooperation in the economic, trade, scientific and technical areas, conducted in accordance with the norms of international law.

CSTO member States are principled and committed advocates of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and related materials. Countering new threats and challenges to national, regional and international security, including international terrorism, will continue to be a significant component of the work of the CSTO.

The President: There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. I intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m. sharp.

The meeting was suspended at 1 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5635 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5635th meeting

Friday, 23 February 2007, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Burian	(Slovakia)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Cartuyvels
	China	Ms. Song Danhui
	Congo	Mr. Biabaroh-Iboro
	France	Ms. Rouillard
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Pérez
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Sulaiti
	Russian Federation	Mr. Paletskiy
	South Africa	Mr. Paschalis
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mrs. Job
	United States of America	Ms. Willson

Agenda

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

Implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006)

Letter dated 12 February 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/84)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

07-24825 (E)

The meeting resumed at 3.10 p.m.

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Norway.

Mr. Løvald (Norway): Norway welcomes the debate on cooperation between the Security Council and international organizations in the implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006). Those resolutions address the most pressing proliferation challenges of today. We are therefore firmly committed to their implementation.

Resolution 1540 (2004) constitutes an essential element of the global counter-proliferation and counter-terrorism regime. It is imperative that individual States implement and enforce national export control regulations called for in the resolution on the basis of high international standards. Only in that way can we develop a no-go area for proliferators and illicit procurement activities.

Although resolution 1540 (2004) recognizes that national Governments are responsible for establishing effective domestic controls to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, it is absolutely essential that their efforts be coordinated through international cooperation. In that regard, we attach great importance to paragraph 7 of the resolution, which recognizes that some States may require assistance in implementing the provisions of the resolution and invites States that are in a position to do so to offer assistance in response to specific requests.

Norway has for many years supported various activities in the field of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Financial support has been channelled through the United Nations system and to various Norwegian and international research institutions. We have also provided funding for seminars on implementing resolution 1540 (2004).

Through regional seminars and outreach programmes, the Committee and Member States have commendably focused on increasing the quantity and quality of reporting. Ongoing work with that focus is necessary and welcome. The debate here today is particularly welcome because there is also a need to improve the form and quality of outreach and assistance in that regard. Not only do States have a responsibility for reporting, but those States and organizations which provide assistance also have a duty to ensure that, to the fullest extent possible, it is effective, efficient and well coordinated.

Because the obligations under resolution 1540 (2004) overlap and interlock with numerous international agreements and regimes, as well as bilateral programmes, that requires understanding the full scope and content of the assistance that is already provided by States and international and regional organizations, sharing lessons learned and, where possible, developing common and realistic expectations of information-sharing, cooperation and coordination. Norway hopes that this debate will move us in that direction.

My Government is also pleased to announce that it is co-hosting, with the Governments of Germany and Chile, an upcoming workshop on national non-proliferation controls, a topic which reflects the diverse obligations, mechanisms and actors that must work in concert to achieve effective implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and, more broadly, for a strengthened non-proliferation regime.

The main items to be discussed at the workshop this coming spring include implementation challenges, assistance and enhanced cooperation. Norway and its co-organizers expect that the workshop will produce recommendations to help donors, organizations and States seeking assistance to better focus and coordinate their own efforts, taking into account existing programmes and their comparative advantages. Workshop recommendations should account for common challenges and lessons learned, and donors

and providers of assistance would benefit from the participation of a select number of countries receiving such assistance. We also hope that the recommendations which emerge from the workshop will contribute to the aims proposed by the Committee Chairman in his opening remarks here today and in the proposed presidential statement.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Israel.

Mr. Carmon (Israel): At the outset, allow me to express our gratitude to you, Sir, for your able stewardship of the Council this month and to commend you for convening this debate.

Israel was a strong supporter of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). The resolution is, in our opinion, a significant step towards the consolidation and implementation of international standards against the threats of international terrorism. It is also, of course, an important step in support of the international effort against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The possibility that weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery could fall into the hands of terrorists and the threat of unmonitored transfer of sensitive items have become, in recent years, one of the worst nightmares of the international community. Resolution 1540 (2004) and its full implementation represent important progress in our joint struggle to prevent the realization of that terrifying scenario. The International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism is yet another significant step forward in that context.

The commitment of Member States to prevent any cooperation with terrorists and terrorist organizations attempting to acquire or develop weapons of mass destruction, and the commitment to set clear and strong standards for monitoring dual-use types of items, are vital tools in our efforts.

Moreover, we are of the view that some components of that important resolution can also be relevant to the prevention of transfer of conventional arms to terrorists. It is particularly relevant when the presence of sophisticated weaponry in the hands of terrorists has proven to have strategic implications. In that context, it should be noted that rockets of various ranges can serve as a means to launch chemical and biological weapons. The transfer of such rockets to non-State actors — in particular to terrorists — is therefore already a violation of paragraphs 1 and 2 of resolution 1540 (2004). That violation has clearly been demonstrated by the uranium supplied to the Hizbollah terrorist organization, as witnessed recently in Lebanon.

For its part, Israel has made significant progress in aligning itself with the highest international standards in the field of exports control on sensitive items, including dual-use items, by adopting into Israeli law the various lists of the supplier regimes, namely, those of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Australia Group and the Wassenaar Arrangement. Furthermore, Israel maintains a continuous dialogue with the various regimes and with relevant States, with the aim of improving control over facilities and items at the highest level.

We hope that all States will act in accordance with resolution 1540 (2004). True implementation of the resolution could contribute to a safer world. For its part, Israel is fully committed to it.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Hill (Australia): Australia welcomes this opportunity to discuss resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006) on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Apart from saying a few words on behalf of my country, I also want to associate myself with the statement that will be delivered shortly by the representative of New Zealand on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum. Australia strongly supports Security Council efforts to prevent the proliferation of WMD. We encourage the Council to be as active as possible in that regard.

The unanimous adoption of resolution 1540 (2004) was a historic achievement. It was the first international instrument to place obligations on all States to take comprehensive action to prevent the proliferation of WMD, their means of delivery and related materials in an integrated and comprehensive manner. The resolution specifically focused on the risk to all States posed by non-State actors obtaining weapons of mass destruction. It makes strong national controls on WMD-related material and technologies and the enforcement of such controls a requirement for all States.

Those measures are no longer merely an option for States to consider. Resolution 1540 (2004) required all Member States of the United Nations to submit a report on the steps they have taken, or intend to take, to implement the resolution. It is a matter of regret that some States have still not been able to submit their reports to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). We encourage them to do so as soon as possible.

In that regard, Australia recognizes that some States might require assistance in implementing the provisions of the resolution. In fact, that is recognized in the resolution itself. Australia has already provided such assistance bilaterally and in conjunction with our regional neighbours, including through the Pacific Islands Forum. We are, of course, willing to continue to provide such assistance to ensure that States have the legal and regulatory infrastructure, capacity and experience to fulfil the provisions of the resolution.

In addition to domestic action by States there is also a range of international regimes that address the issues covered by resolution 1540 (2004). Not all of those international regimes are suitable or appropriate for all States to join, but they demonstrate the ways in which the resolution operates interactively with a range of other international non-proliferation and safeguards regimes. I would like to mention just two.

First, I would recall that resolution 1540 (2004) requires States to adopt controls on brokering activities. For most States that is a relatively new field, but it has become increasingly clear, in the current security environment, that controls on brokering activities involving conventional, military and WMD-related goods have an important role to play in preventing proliferation. The Australia Group has commenced discussions on brokering activities, as have other non-proliferation and safeguards regimes.

The Republic of Korea has now taken the initiative to host an international seminar on brokering controls, to be held in Seoul at the end of March, to which members of non-proliferation and safeguards regimes will be invited, as well as other regional participants. Australia is proud to be co-chairing that important seminar with our Korean colleagues.

I also want to mention one other important, and indeed essential, international tool that reinforces the goals of the resolution. Australia is a participant in the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), which, I would like to remind members, aims at preventing trafficking in WMD, their delivery systems and related material to and from States and to non-State actors of proliferation concern. In the light of the statement by the Ambassador of Cuba, I should remind the Council that PSI activities are to be consistent with national legal authorities and international frameworks. Over 80 states have endorsed the PSI. We would, of course, regard it as more effective if it ultimately achieved global coverage. We would therefore like to take this opportunity to invite other States to consider joining the Proliferation Security Initiative, in order that it may ultimately have that global adherence.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of El Salvador.

Mr. Martínez Flores (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Government of El Salvador would like to reiterate its firm support for all measures adopted at the United Nations to combat international terrorism. Such measures should be implemented in accordance with the principles of the Charter, international law and international agreements and conventions on the matter.

We small countries share the concern of the international community, for we understand that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery threatens our sovereignty as well as international peace and security — as proliferation turns our countries into illicit transit channels for such materials.

We are fully convinced that combating terrorism must take place in the context of a legal framework that conveys the necessary legitimacy upon Governments as they seek to achieve the goals of that effort. But we also believe that it is of the utmost importance to strengthen international cooperation, as that is a key element in ensuring greater effectiveness and efficiency for preventive efforts.

Our commitment to the fight against international terrorism has guided our efforts at the domestic, bilateral, subregional, regional and international levels. We have reinstated our national security council, which, among other things, provides advice to our country's President and assesses the situation with a view to determining the steps to be taken to prevent, suppress and control terrorist acts and related crimes.

Our inter-agency counter-terrorism group is responsible for formulating, implementing and managing technical efforts to combat terrorism. The group carries out its work in four specialized areas, namely, security, financial matters, border control and legal affairs. Its mandate is therefore fully in line with the provisions of paragraph 5 of resolution 1673 (2006). Among its other responsibilities, the group has prepared the reports that the Government of El Salvador has presented to international organizations in connection with its compliance with resolutions, mandates and international instruments to which we are party as part of the fight against terrorism.

The group also drafted the special law on terrorist acts, which my country's legislative assembly has already adopted. The law includes provisions relating to the prevention, investigation, punishment and eradication of crimes associated with terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including the financing of terrorism and related activities. The legislation empowers the competent legal authorities to take the necessary steps to freeze assets and funds of, and financial transactions by, persons and organizations identified by the Security Council in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter of the Organization. The terrorism law also contains a chapter on the financing of terrorism as a separate crime, and in that context includes a regulation relating to measures to control financing, such as the freezing of assets regardless of their provenance.

With regard to non-profit organizations, a special regulation has been considered that is aimed at better monitoring the assets of such organizations, averting the possibility of their being used to commit crimes, especially the crime of financing terrorism.

Other measures we are continuing to implement include ongoing vehicle checks on international roads, migration controls and inspections at hotels, land terminals and other locations frequented by foreigners. The armed forces of El Salvador, with the support of the national police, have also put in place better controls with respect to the smuggling of goods and narcotic drugs into or through our territory.

El Salvador has submitted the relevant report in compliance with resolution 1540 (2004).

The Government of El Salvador will continue to take all necessary administrative and legal measures, and we are prepared to strengthen international cooperation in various fields to enhance the effectiveness of the fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We hope that we will soon reach agreement on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, and in that respect we offer our full cooperation.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Pakistan, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Hashmi (Pakistan): I have the honour to present Pakistan's statement to the Council on behalf of Ambassador Munir Akram, who sends his regrets, as he is delayed as a result of heavy traffic.

Mr. President, we thank you for having convened this timely debate. We welcome the decision to hold an open debate in the Council. It is a rare privilege for non-members of the Council to be able to discuss the importance and relevance of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006) in this Chamber.

We thank the Director General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for his comprehensive statement, and express our appreciation also for the statements made by the representatives of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the World Customs Organization.

Both resolution 1540 (2004) and resolution 1673 (2006) provide for coordination and cooperation with international organizations so as to advance the objectives of resolution 1540 (2004). At the same time, resolution 1540 (2004) also affirms that none of the obligations contained therein shall be interpreted so as to alter the responsibilities of the IAEA or the OPCW. We fully acknowledge the important work being done by international organizations such as the IAEA and the OPCW in building the capacity of the States members of those organizations in many areas.

It is important that, in associating these organizations with the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), their own functions and responsibilities be fully preserved. In any case, these international organizations predate resolution 1540 (2004) and would have continued their important work regardless of the resolution.

Some Council members, surely the permanent members, may recall that concerns were raised in December 2004 over the capacity of the 1540 Committee, in the context of its expertise, manpower

and resources, to promote implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). Almost three years after the adoption of that resolution, it is clear that the 1540 Committee has done whatever it can within its capacity constraints.

The concept paper presented by Slovakia in connection with this debate notes that 135 Member States have submitted their first national implementation reports and that 85 have provided additional information. Pakistan has provided two reports to the 1540 Committee. The concept paper provides general information on the challenges faced in implementing the resolutions. The reasons for non-reporting by a number of States need to be examined in a cooperative and constructive manner.

It is clear that many States lack the necessary expertise and resources related to the implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006). There are also vast differences in the economic, industrial, legal and financial profiles of Member States. More importantly, there is a general perception that there is a wide gap between the promises made and the provision of the assistance required, especially by developing States. An additional problem is reporting fatigue, including for those States which have filed implementation reports.

Resolution 1540 (2004) rightly affirmed that prevention of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) should not hamper international cooperation in materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes, while the goal of peaceful utilization should not be used as a cover for proliferation. The growing global demand for nuclear power generation underlines the need for equitable and non-discriminatory steps by supplier States to strike a balance between proliferation concerns and facilitation of the legitimate trade in equipment, materials and technology for the increased generation of nuclear energy.

One of the ways in which such a balance could be achieved would be to commence negotiations for truly multilateral arrangements for governing the trade in dual-use and sensitive items and technology. The existing arrangements, and their selective application, remain contrary to the spirit of resolution 1540 (2004).

We wish to take this opportunity to say a few words on the working methods of the 1540 Committee, especially with regard to the hiring of its experts. The manner in which the contracts of some experts have been handled reinforces the widely held perception outside the Council that the whole process of marshalling the resolution, its implementation, the composition of the Committee, its experts and staff is being led by the developed countries, to the exclusion of a large number of countries from the developing world. We hope that the Council and the Committee will seek to ensure an adequate and equitable representation of experts from the developing countries in a transparent manner.

The level of implementation of national measures by Member States, the gaps between assurances and supply of assistance, and the lack of capacity on the part of Member States as well as of the 1540 Committee, should lead to a critical assessment of the competence and capability of the Council to promote the non-proliferation agenda. Member States may also have to evaluate the outcome of the "encouragement" provided by resolution 1540 (2004) in the past three years to fully implement the disarmament treaties and agreements. In the context of the Council's growing interest in preventing WMD proliferation, it is important to reconcile and balance the lack of implementation of disarmament obligations by certain Council members with their zeal in promoting non-proliferation. Discrimination and double standards are the enemy of collective purpose and action.

When resolution 1540 (2004) was adopted, Pakistan, then a member of the Council, joined the consensus because we concurred that there was a gap in the international rules relating to the acquisition and illicit transfer of WMD by non-State actors. We also agreed that the matter was important and urgent enough to be addressed in an exceptional manner by the Security Council. Now that the Council has addressed the urgent dimension of the danger, it is necessary to revert to the normal avenues for the creation of international rules and norms, that is, through the process of international treaty-making. The time has now come to revive the multilateral disarmament machinery, so that future challenges in the area of non-proliferation can be addressed in open, transparent and inclusive processes.

In that context, we believe that the General Assembly should begin early discussions to authorize the convening of an international diplomatic conference, or request the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to negotiate an international treaty to address the issue of the acquisition of WMD by

non-State actors or terrorists. Such a treaty could be based on the provisions of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006). It should achieve what resolution 1540 (2004) did not, that is, provide clear definitions of non-State actors, means of delivery, related materials, and so on. That would facilitate the adoption of national legislation.

The treaty should also create appropriate executive and administrative bodies to promote adherence and facilitate international assistance and cooperation — along the lines, for example, of the national authorities that are required to be established under the Chemical Weapons Convention and which are assisted in their work by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. The International Atomic Energy Agency also has a similar facilitation role under its various conventions and programmes. Finally, the treaty should also establish the mechanisms necessary to ensure equitable implementation, monitoring and compliance with its provisions.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Mr. García Moritán (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, Mr. President, allow me to express my delegation's gratitude for your organization of this open Security Council debate on cooperation between the Council and relevant international organizations in the implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006).

This debate has given us the opportunity to be in direct contact with organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the World Customs Organization (WCO), whose work in this field is of fundamental importance and should enjoy the firm support of all Member States.

International cooperation in the non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery and related materials is of crucial importance in achieving the Security Council's objective of prevailing in the fight against the threat to international peace and security posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and by international terrorism. We believe also that specific actions in the field of non-proliferation must go hand in hand with a clear and specific commitment that can be translated into a plan of action in the field of disarmament by all members of the international community.

My country has offered its support to those countries that may need assistance in the implementation of obligations arising out of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006), especially countries in our region.

In June 2005, together with the Government of Spain, we organized a first regional seminar on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), held in Guatemala. Its objective was to address the specific difficulties of the countries of Central America and the Caribbean. Subsequently, in September of the same year, we organized another seminar, this time together with the United Kingdom, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. That seminar was the first time since its establishment that the 1540 Committee had the opportunity to be in contact with the entire region. Argentina also actively participated in the seminar held in Peru last November under the auspices of Spain and the European Union.

It is because we believe that in this area regional cooperation is fundamental that we are meeting the challenge of implementing these extremely important resolutions. That is why cooperation with regional and subregional organizations should also be encouraged.

We submitted in a timely manner our national report, prepared by our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is our focal point on this issue, with the support of an inter-ministerial commission created for this purpose. The report has since been updated. Those actions mesh with national criminal and administrative legislation to implement at the national level our international obligations. In this context, I would like to note that Argentine legislation is under constant review and revision so that we can make the necessary changes. Argentina's commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation is reflected in our adoption of all existing export control regimes and their national implementation through a commission established for that purpose as early as 1992.

In that context, our work and the experience we have gained enable us to offer any support that other countries of the region may request to help with national implementation in the technical, judicial and customs fields.

My delegation would like to reaffirm its support for the work of the Committee and recalls that

resolution 1673 (2006) requested that it intensify its efforts through a work programme to include the compilation of information, outreach, dialogue, assistance and cooperation. Within this framework of action, the adoption of measures for accounting, physical protection, border and police control and national control of trans-shipment and export, including monitoring the provision of financial and other services, is of particular importance.

In this respect, we renew Argentina's commitment to these objectives and hope that the action plan promoted by the 1540 Committee will enable us to achieve our common goals.

Let me reiterate the determination of the Argentine Government in the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and related materials, as well as our readiness to move forward together with the international community in the fight against terrorism.

Finally, we would like to say that we regret the way in which the 1540 Committee recently proceeded to renew the contracts of the groups of experts. We urge that, in the future, criteria be used, both for selecting experts and for renewing their contracts, that would ensure that the solution is transparent and that would guarantee equality for all Members of the United Nations.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Oh Joon (Republic of Korea): First of all, Mr. President, I would like to join previous speakers in thanking you for convening today's open debate on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006). My delegation views today's debate as an opportunity to renew our commitment to the full implementation of those resolutions and to share our views on the best means of doing so.

The world today faces mounting threats from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Particularly frightening is the possibility of such weapons being used by terrorists. It has become imperative for the international community to work together to address these threats. Against this backdrop, the Security Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 1540 (2004) was a historic step which was reinforced last year with the adoption of resolution 1673 (2006).

Three years after the passage of resolution 1540 (2004), there are still daunting challenges to the attainment of its goals. As indicated in the concept paper prepared for today's debate (S/2007/84, annex), there are 58 States that have not yet submitted their first national reports on implementation. While the submission of a report does not guarantee implementation, it is an important first step in the process. My delegation therefore calls for universal submission of national reports. More intensive efforts should be made to achieve that end. In this regard, we welcome the 1540 Committee's programme of work to intensify its outreach activities and to assist States in preparing and submitting national reports.

According to the Committee's analysis of those national reports that have been submitted, there are in many cases significant gaps between the commitments of States to the resolution and their practical implementation of its requirements. There are also imbalances in implementation among States and regions. My delegation believes that identifying and understanding these gaps and imbalances is important to ensure the full and effective implementation of the resolution in the mid to long term. In this respect, the Committee needs to strengthen its monitoring role. It would also be useful to promote good practices and share lessons learned in closing the gaps and eliminating the imbalances.

While implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) at the national level is fundamental, full and effective implementation will also require coordination and cooperation at the subregional, regional and international levels. Regional and subregional initiatives aimed at implementation would not only spur national Governments to action, but would also provide a positive example for nations in other regions.

Also conducive to attaining the goals of the resolution is the sharing of information and experience on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction with relevant international organizations and export control regimes. In that respect, it is welcome and opportune that representatives of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the World Customs Organization are participating in today's debate. Similarly, we welcome the initiative of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) to work closely with international and regional organizations.

The Republic of Korea has been an active participant in international efforts aimed at the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in all its aspects and is a State party to most international disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and multilateral export control regimes. We have faithfully implemented resolution 1540 (2004), putting in place the necessary legal and administrative systems to ensure compliance. We are committed to its full implementation at the national, regional and international levels.

In that regard, my delegation is pleased to report that the Republic of Korea, together with Australia — as stated earlier by the representative of Australia — will host an international seminar next month in Seoul on the subject of brokering controls in all its aspects, at which one session will be devoted to Security Council resolutions on non-proliferation, including resolution 1540 (2004).

Let me close by commending the strenuous efforts of the 1540 Committee and its Chairman, Ambassador Burian, to facilitate implementation of the resolution. We assure him of our full support and cooperation in that important endeavour.

The President: I now call on the representative of Japan.

Mr. Shinyo (Japan): At the outset, since we have not had an opportunity for quite some time in this Chamber to have a discussion focused solely on resolution 1540 (2004), I highly commend your initiative, Mr. President, to hold an open debate on this important subject, as you currently chair the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, and the representatives of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Customs Organization for their statements.

Last week, a workshop on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) was held in San Francisco, for the first time within the framework of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum (ARF), and an expert from my delegation took part. I received a report that the workshop was quite fruitful. In that regard, I wish to thank the Governments of the United States, Canada and Singapore, which were its sponsors. At the workshop, the Regional Forum participants explained their national efforts to implement resolution 1540 (2004), and it is impressive that a number of Asian countries have made strides in its implementation. That fact, in my view, is attributable to the outreach activities undertaken by you, Mr. President, in particular. I believe that it also demonstrates that the activities related to resolution 1540 (2004) have apparently shifted from the stage of reporting to the next phase. At the same time, on the basis of the discussions at the workshop and my mission's experience while serving on the 1540 Committee for the past two years, it appears that the challenges surrounding the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) have become clearer. Today, I would like to share some thoughts on those challenges.

First, as regards cooperation with international organizations, the 1540 Committee itself does not have the capacity at this point to provide assistance to Member States. Therefore, international organizations that have assistance agendas should play active roles. I was encouraged by the statements made by the representatives of the competent international organizations. It is necessary for those countries that need assistance to communicate with those organizations in order to receive adequate assistance.

At the same time, since assistance needs may vary, depending on the situation in each State, donors should provide tailor-made assistance in order to address the specific needs of the recipients. In that connection, I welcome the initiative by Norway, Germany and Chile to hold a workshop here in New York in March, aimed at, among other things, closer coordination among donor countries and relevant international and regional organizations.

Japan, for its part, is providing a wide variety of programmes and seminars for capacity-building and training in such areas as aviation security, maritime and port security and customs and export control. Moreover, Japan recently organized the Asian Senior-level Talks on Non-Proliferation for the third time since 2004, to discuss ways to accelerate efforts aimed at the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in Asia. Japan looks forward to coordinating closely with international organizations and other potential donors for the further enhancement of global cooperation in this area.

Secondly, the existence of gaps in various aspects of implementation on the part of many countries

remains a problem. It is often pointed out that, in a number of States, high priority is not necessarily given to this area, as opposed to development assistance, and that in inter-agency processes the relevant agencies do not provide enough support for the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). Those issues should, in principle, be tackled by each individual country, but, if other countries could share their experience in overcoming them, it would be very helpful. When we discuss the necessity of sharing experience, we tend to talk only about good experience. The fact is that the sharing of bad experience, and prescriptions for addressing such difficulties, would be the most useful information for States confronting similar problems.

Thirdly, there is a need for the extensive utilization of expert knowledge. In recent months, the interest of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and think tanks in resolution 1540 (2004) has grown. We welcome opinions expressed by research institutions, regardless of their political positions, because they not only help increase awareness regarding the resolution but also provide new perspectives for Member States to consider. The seminar recently organized by think tanks succinctly summarized the challenges for the resolution, including those that I have just enumerated. Such recommendations and observations should not simply be presented without being properly followed up; it is important that such points be further elaborated and reflected in the discussions in the 1540 Committee and, moreover, in the Security Council.

As is often pointed out, the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) is a long-term process, and there is no magic formula. Member States should bring their expertise together, with the help of international organizations and NGOs, and thoroughly discuss ways to further effectively implement the resolution. To that end, I look forward to having further opportunities to discuss this issue on a regular basis.

The President: I now call on the representative of Guatemala.

Mr. Skinner-Klée (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, my delegation wishes to thank the delegation of Slovakia for having convened this open debate on an issue that is of great importance to my country. I should also like to congratulate you in particular, Mr. President, on your commendable work as Chairman of the Security Council established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

Today's meeting gives countries not members of the Security Council an opportunity to receive information on the activities of international agencies in the field and to offer observations on issues of general interest, in particular concerning exchanges of experiences, the preparation of national reports to the 1540 Committee and training in report preparation for States that so request in their efforts to comply with the provisions of paragraph 4 of the resolution.

Guatemala also wishes to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for their informative reports this morning.

Resolution 1540 (2004) is particularly important in fighting terrorism because it establishes a prevention mechanism aimed at preventing non-State actors, in particular terrorist groups, from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and related materials. Guatemala's commitment to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction results from our conviction that a clear and committed policy in that field helps increase security around the world and in specific regions, while at the same time increasing the opportunities for growth and development.

In that context, Guatemala submitted its national report to the 1540 Committee in October 2004. I wish to point out that the preparation of the report, although difficult, was an enriching task because it enabled us more precisely to identify and understand the weaknesses and strengths of the Guatemalan system and also made possible the full and active participation of all national institutions working in this area.

This exercise not only ensured better inter-institutional coordination, the creation of awareness in the public and private sectors and the identification of legal gaps and shortcomings in the implementation of legislation; it also underscored the need to update our legislation to accord with the State's international obligations.

With regard to experience gained at the national level, the inter-institutional consultation mechanism

enabled us to identify both administrative and legislative needs. As a result, our own inter-institutional committee worked on the preparation of a draft counter-terrorism law. The draft law is aimed at ensuring harsh punishment for any terrorist act. It comprises a body of regulations that will allow us to prevent terrorist acts and maintain tight security controls, through the establishment of a national counter-terrorism security council whose composition and functions will focus on the prevention and control of terrorism.

My delegation believes that assistance and resources, especially for developing countries, are essential for effective implementation of the relevant national measures, because the main objectives behind the adoption of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006) will be very difficult to achieve without international cooperation and assistance. We commend the achievements of the 1540 Committee in its outreach activities at the regional and subregional levels through the organization of workshops and seminars, especially in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, in order to create a space for the exchange of ideas on the scope of resolution 1540 (2004), to share national experiences in preparing reports and to become familiar with the degree of national implementation of international instruments on weapons of mass destruction. We especially thank the European Union for its technical and financial assistance in holding such seminars.

The first regional meeting on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) for countries of Central America and the Caribbean was held in Antigua, Guatemala, in June 2005. It was sponsored by the Governments of Argentina and Spain and specifically addressed the preparation of reports. Guatemala was also privileged to participate in the regional seminars on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) in Latin America and the Caribbean which were held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in September 2005, and more recently in Lima, Peru, in November 2006.

Those seminars have helped encourage full implementation of the resolution and have provided clear guidelines for future regional cooperation in our collective efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. They also highlighted the need to promote technical assistance initiatives to facilitate the implementation of the resolution and to strengthen the role of regional and subregional organizations in activities in this sphere.

In that context, we are happy to see that the Committee is continuing to strengthen its links to international and regional organizations such as the European Union, the Organization of American States, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the World Customs Organization and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, among others, in order to benefit from their experience.

We should be aware that national reports are important for understanding the scope of the difficulties we face and the best way to approach them. It will benefit all of us if we are frank and open with regard to our capacity to respond to the threats of proliferation. A critical review by each State of its own laws and regulations will also enable us to identify shortcomings. However, we must take into account national capacities, because the increasingly frequent requests by the Security Council for reports sometimes leads to overburdening State institutions in their administrative work, and in the majority of cases, it is difficult to comply, as the representatives of South Africa and Indonesia noted this morning.

There is still a great deal to do in order to achieve a universal system for the submission of reports in compliance with both resolution 1540 (2004) and with other Security Council resolutions that also request reports. However, we are certain that with this type of broad discussion — and with your efforts, Mr. President — we will be able to make progress in a coordinated and effective fashion. Recently, the Government of Guatemala requested, through the proper channels, technical and financial assistance from the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, in order to complete our national report and make our due contributions.

We listened with interest to the ideas put forward during today's debate and will continue to assess them. Guatemala believes that the outcome of the Council's deliberation on this matter will help us to harmonize our counter-terrorism and non-proliferation efforts and will lead to greater security for our citizens.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Uruguay.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am pleased to congratulate you once again, Sir, and to thank your delegation for its initiative in bringing to the Security Council issues, such as the theme of today's discussion, which are of interest to all of us.

In many forums, Uruguay has stated its concern at the lack of concrete progress in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. The present context of multilateral negotiations on disarmament and non-proliferation is not at all encouraging. The Conference on Disarmament has not been able to adopt an agenda enabling it to resume its substantive work. The 2006 Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms achieved no concrete outcome, and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty continues to await entry into force 10 years after it opened for signature.

Next year, preparatory activities for a new stage in the review of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will begin. As has been the tradition in recent review conferences, we do not envisage significant progress on the substantive issues on the agenda, because the nuclear disarmament process has been nearly paralyzed since the Treaty was extended indefinitely in 1995.

In that context, Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) is a notable element in the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; in our view, it clearly points the way towards strengthening the system developed by the United Nations — especially since 1991 — to combat international terrorism.

A few days ago we marked a major anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and of the system that sees to the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean. It has now been 40 years since the Treaty was signed, establishing the first of the nuclear-weapon-free zones that have been created around the world through the Treaties of Raratonga, Pelindaba and Bangkok and through the Antarctic Treaty System.

Uruguay has always been at the forefront in the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. That is why we firmly support instruments that, like resolution 1540 (2004), promote fundamental aspects of collective security and make major contributions to combating international terrorism.

We should also hail two other outstanding instruments in the normative sphere related to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons: the Charter and the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). By means of the verification system established through the signature of safeguards agreements and additional protocols, it is possible in most cases to detect possible discrepancies in the movement of materials that could be diverted for military or criminal purposes. The IAEA also plays an important role in early warning of suspicious operations related to the illicit trade in nuclear or radioactive materials. It does this by means of a database that systematically logs illicit trafficking or other unauthorized activity with respect to such materials. The IAEA has developed excellent programmes as the technical body that the Security Council needs for reporting and advice; its importance has grown over the past few years.

Another source of technical expertise is the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization. Uruguay urges the prompt entry into force of the Treaty machinery and, in the meantime, a strengthening of the activities of the Preparatory Commission, including two elements vital for cooperation in a world free of nuclear testing and clandestine nuclear activities: the International Monitoring System and the system of on-site inspections. Both of these are of the greatest importance, which is why, as signatory States decide to join the system and enable it to enter into force, they should continue to provide the greatest possible support to those activities.

Resolution 1540 (2004) has been a catalyst for activities to control the existence and the illicit trade in weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems and precursor substances that could be used to produce them. The 1540 Committee has done outstanding work. It has operated with great efficiency and transparency in the various areas within its mandate, making possible an easy dialogue between national authorities and members of the Council and establishing clear rules making for smooth international cooperation both with the Committee and among States. The machinery established in fulfilment of its mandate has enabled it to consider many national reports and has spurred the creation of internal coordination bodies to adapt

national control procedures, as required for full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

Uruguay has already submitted two reports to the 1540 Committee and has completed the form that systematically brings together the various elements on which periodic information is required.

Although reporting systems are common to all the sanctions committees — in particular, those aimed principally at combating international terrorism in all its forms — the procedures of the 1540 Committee have been clear and easy to implement, certainly as far as the Uruguayan authorities are concerned. In that context, I wish to report that our national authorities for monitoring nuclear and radioactive materials and chemical weapons, as well as our health authorities at the highest level, are in a position to implement the provisions of the resolution, although they may request technical assistance from the relevant international cooperation systems, as required.

Uruguay welcomes the seminars held in various regional contexts to promote the implementation of the provisions of resolution 1540 (2004). We participated actively in the seminars that took place at Buenos Aires in 2005 and at Lima in 2006. It is our understanding that such activities, including the launching of a legislative database on States' implementation of the provisions of the resolution, can improve the system, which would help strengthen that system and make possible the full implementation of the Council mandate.

But for this to take place in a natural way, greater participation by Member States is needed. That means the sustained development of cooperation activities and constant efforts to engage those States that, owing to their national positions, are not part of the system and to persuade them to join.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): Against the backdrop of the small progress made in the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006), the convening of this meeting could not be more timely. I begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for your initiatives. We also appreciate the important contributions made by international organizations, particularly the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the World Customs Organization in assisting the process of national implementation.

Bangladesh is unequivocally committed to disarmament; this emanates from our constitutional obligations. We have been a forerunner in this field, particularly among the South Asian countries, by becoming a party to almost all major disarmament-related treaties covering nuclear, chemical, biological and conventional weapons.

Bangladesh fully supports resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006). Bangladesh neither develops, manufactures, possesses, transfers nor uses nuclear, chemical or biological weapons or their means of delivery. Nor does it provide any form of support to non-State actors that attempt to do so. We have no intention to acquire such weapons of mass destruction in future and have undertaken significant measures to implement the obligations of those two resolutions at the national level. Bangladesh has already submitted its first national report to the 1540 Committee. We are in the process of drafting national legislation on the Convention on Anti-Personnel Landmines and have destroyed all our stockpiles of landmines. Our draft national legislation on the Chemical Weapons Convention is now under active consideration by the Government.

Bangladesh is still striving for a better degree of implementation by expanding the purview of its non-proliferation-related efforts and through strict enforcement of domestic measures already adopted. We are also in the process of preparing a supplementary report to update the 1540 Committee about the incremental progress we have attained on the domestic implementation front. The report will be submitted soon.

My delegation attaches the utmost importance to forging cooperation between the Security Council and international organizations and to the sharing of experiences and lessons learned between Member States and dedicated international bodies. That would go a long way to overcome the difficulties in implementing the obligations of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006). We should consolidate this campaign of cooperation and make the best use of it. Similar exchanges among Member States would complement each State's shortcomings and elevate the status of national implementation to the desired level,

which would be a significant leap forward in the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In that context, we express our readiness to share our experiences and would expect reciprocation of the same.

While acknowledging the genuine difficulties faced by Member States, we should not be oblivious to the absence of genuine political will, which is a major reason behind the dismal level of national implementation. We urge the Member States that have not yet submitted their first national report to do so as soon as possible by taking full advantage of the assistance put forth and in a demonstration of genuine political goodwill.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. Tarragô (Brazil): I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your work as President of the Security Council for the month of February, as well as on your able chairmanship of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

This open debate on resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006) is a timely opportunity for Member States to underline their concern that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as their means of delivery, constitutes a threat to international peace and security. Preventing such proliferation and the horrifying possibility that those weapons may one day fall into terrorist hands requires appropriate action by all Member States.

The risk of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is one of the nefarious consequences of the very existence of those weapons, whose threat will be definitively removed only by means of their complete, verifiable and irreversible elimination.

As one of the countries that helped negotiate resolution 1540 (2004) in 2004, Brazil once again underlines that the core of the work of the 1540 Committee should be that of facilitating the provision of technical assistance. The 1540 Committee should be a vehicle for cooperative efforts and for facilitating the provision of technical assistance to strengthen national capabilities. The final result of the work of the 1540 Committee should be to provide a comprehensive picture of the efforts being undertaken at the national and international levels to respond to the threat posed by non-State actors having access to weapons of mass destruction.

It is important, however, that the Committee continue to abide by the principle that technical assistance should follow the formal request of a Member State, which alone is in a position to identify its own interests and shortcomings.

In response to specific requests, the Brazilian Government has offered to provide assistance to States in the Latin American and Caribbean region and to other developing countries lacking the legal and/or regulatory infrastructures and implementation experience required to implement the provisions of resolution 1540 (2004). We greatly encourage the continuation of outreach activities — in particular regional seminars such as that held in Lima, Peru, in November 2006 — to States of Latin America and the Caribbean in order to promote greater awareness of the provisions of that resolution.

With regard to the reporting mechanism, we believe that the Committee should concentrate on concluding the evaluation of the national reports — the first report — and of additional information — the second report. Countries that have not yet provided that information should be encouraged to do so as soon as possible. The Committee should establish a date in order for Member States to present a third report, if deemed necessary.

Before concluding, I refer to a recent decision taken by the 1540 Committee to extend the contracts of five of its experts. Two experts, nationals of permanent members of this Council, had their contracts extended until the end of 2007, with the possibility of a further extension. The contracts of the three others, who are not nationals of permanent members, were extended for shorter periods of time.

No clear explanation was provided for such differential treatment of the experts. Possibly, such treatment had to do with the fact that some are nationals of permanent members and some are not. If that is so, it is our hope that in the future similar decisions by the Committee will afford equal opportunity to experts, irrespective of their nationality.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Viet Nam.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): On behalf of the Vietnamese delegation, I thank you, Sir, and the

Council for permission to participate in this open debate today.

Viet Nam has always held that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as their means of delivery, constitutes a threat to international peace and security. In our first report, submitted in October 2004, on implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), we committed to continuing to take effective measures to control and prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and to refrain from providing any form of support to non-State actors that attempt to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer or use them. Above all, the report reaffirmed that the State of Viet Nam does not have and does not intend to manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport, transfer or use any of those weapons. In discussing today the issue of cooperation in implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), we are guided by that fundamental policy and commitment.

While attaching great importance to the role of the 1540 Committee and commending the work it has done so far — especially its efforts to develop a database to provide information on laws, regulations and other measures related to States' implementation of the resolution, as well as to act as a clearing house on assistance to States in need — we also share the view that cooperation at different levels is necessary to ensure implementation of the resolution. My delegation believes that the outreach activities of the Committee have achieved initial concrete results, proved by the successes of recent seminars and workshops, including the seminar for Asia and the Pacific held at Beijing in July 2006 and the workshop of the Regional Forum of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) held at San Francisco last week, in which Viet Nam participated.

Those events have been useful in helping Member States understand better not only the important role of the United Nations in global efforts to eliminate the threat posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, but also the important role that regional organizations, including ones such as the ASEAN Regional Forum, can play in securing implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by way of increasing awareness of the obligations and requirements of the resolution, thus facilitating cooperation and coordination on implementation at the regional and global levels. It has been widely recognized that, in many States, the difficulties in implementing the resolution relate not only to the limited knowledge of the issue, but also to the lack of inter-agency coordination and of the resources and means for specific implementation measures.

A close look would reveal that such difficulties are interrelated. Very often, the lack of coordination results from the lack of knowledge and the lack of knowledge itself results from the lack of the resources and means necessary for the dissemination in local languages of relevant information and regulations. Identifying the need of States for assistance has been an important element of such regional and subregional activities. In the view of my delegation, that should also be an important element in cooperation between the Security Council and international organizations in implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

As organizations established for the purpose of assuring the implementation of, and adherence to, treaty obligations, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons have unique and major roles in preventing the proliferation of nuclear and chemical weapons, in line with the very purpose of resolution 1540 (2004). We support cooperation between those organizations, as well as their cooperation with the Security Council, in the implementation of that resolution. In the same vein, we support cooperation between the Council and the World Customs Organization. In that connection, we wish to echo the widely held view that the implementation of export controls should not be used as a tool to prevent the legitimate development of civilian nuclear, chemical or biological industries that serve peaceful purposes.

We welcome the continuous and close cooperation between the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) and the Committee established in accordance with resolution 1267 (1999). By sharing their resources, experience and expertise, the 1540 Committee and those organs will certainly better facilitate the effective implementation of the resolution.

There exists an organic relationship between non-proliferation and disarmament. The role and capacity

of United Nations disarmament mechanisms should be strengthened. Cooperation between the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and United Nations disarmament mechanisms, especially the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs, should be further enhanced.

Viet Nam is a party to all major international disarmament and non-proliferation treaties, including the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone. We have always adhered strictly to our obligations under those treaties. We will continue dialogue and cooperation with the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) on the implementation of the resolution.

Finally, before I conclude, let me reaffirm our position that, while cooperation among relevant organizations and cooperation between the Security Council and those organizations in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) is necessary, such cooperation must be based on respect for the Charter of the United Nations and national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Duplication and overlapping of work must be avoided. The implementation of the resolution remains fundamentally a national responsibility.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

Ms. Banks (New Zealand): I welcome the opportunity to speak today on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum member States represented in New York, namely, Australia, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and my own country, New Zealand.

At the outset, I would like to stress that the member States of the Pacific Islands Forum fully recognize the importance of resolution 1540 (2004) and take their obligations seriously. There are considerable capacity and resource challenges in our region, particularly for smaller States, in meeting the resolution's obligations, both in terms of reporting and implementation. In that regard, we particularly welcome the comments made by the representatives of South Africa and Indonesia this morning, namely, that the Council should take both capacity and proliferation risks into account when working with Member States. From our perspective, cooperation between the Council, international and regional organizations and Member States can be extremely helpful in addressing the challenges we face in our region. We would like to offer several brief comments on how to optimize that cooperation.

First, when planning outreach through regional groupings, particularly to the small States in our region, the Council needs to be realistic about the capacity and competing obligations of those States. That means that, where possible, the Security Council should try to combine the approaches of the three relevant Committees so that there can be a coordinated dialogue between the Council and the regional organization concerned over reporting and implementation obligations. We understand fully that the scope of the three resolutions is different, but we do think that there are synergies and efficiencies possible in combined outreach from the Security Council. A streamlined approach will be far more effective in building successful engagement.

Secondly, it is important to recognize that small States have extremely limited resources and are not in a position to absorb multiple technical assistance approaches. To be specific, in our own region, we feel that more than one or two such projects a year would be difficult. Given the limitations imposed by the capacity restraints of small Member States, the Council should be prepared to prioritize its requirements. We note that joint planning is currently under way between the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to hold a workshop in our region on legislative drafting mid-year. We note that the expert group of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) is also interested in a regional workshop. We hope that the Committee can consider a single coordinated event.

Thirdly, one size does not fit all. Workshops need to be targeted to the specific needs of the region, and should be developed in close cooperation with regional members well in advance of the event. Consultation and a realistic lead time should help the development of a project of the greatest possible relevance to the region. Assistance also needs to be able to take into account the specific requirements of individual States.

Fourthly — and this is our last point — technical assistance needs to be a whole package. Workshops are very helpful, but they are only part of the solution. There needs to be a continued focus on capacity-building through the implementation stage. It is important to set up ongoing and more tailored technical support in follow-up to workshops. That requires ongoing investment and support from the international community. We welcome the fact that the representative of the Department for Disarmament Affairs made comments to that effect this morning.

Speaking briefly in my national capacity, I would also like to assure the Council of New Zealand's strong commitment to providing assistance in our region. New Zealand is engaged in ongoing bilateral assistance projects with partners in the Pacific region to assist with reporting and the implementation of resolutions 1257 (1999), 1373 (2001) and 1540 (2004). We hosted a regional meeting in May 2006 that was aimed at building mutual understanding between the Council and the Pacific region on those issues. We believe that helped to lay the foundation for a new style of engagement.

In conclusion, we in the Pacific region greatly appreciate the efforts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) to engage with our region. We have the will to play our part, and we look forward to the international community's ongoing interest and assistance.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Danesh-Yazdi (Islamic Republic of Iran): Today the Council is debating a matter of major importance to the international community. The continued existence and development of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the prospect of non-State actors acquiring such weapons are serious threats faced by the whole world. In addition, the possibility of the use or the threat of use of those weapons by those who possess them is a major threat to international peace and security. Given the gravity and seriousness of those threats, we have never wavered in our support for all efforts genuinely aimed at dealing with this menace, within the parameters of international law.

As a State party to all international instruments banning WMD — namely, the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and the 1925 Geneva Protocol — and on the basis of our ideological as well as various international commitments, the Islamic Republic of Iran has always considered the possession, acquisition, development and use of WMD to be inhumane, immoral and illegal, and believes that the most effective way to prevent non-State actors from acquiring WMD is through the total elimination of such weapons. Iran, as a recent victim of weapons of mass destruction, strongly believes that the international community must strive to ensure that the nightmare visited by the United States upon the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki never happens again. Therefore, the only absolute guarantee is the total elimination of nuclear weapons, as stipulated by the NPT and emphasized in the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice.

The growing risk of the acquisition of WMD by terrorists and non-State actors has been a matter of grave concern to all of us in the international community in recent years. The recent heinous terrorist attack in Iraq, in which chlorine gas was used by terrorists, resulting in the death and injury of many innocent Iraqi people, made clear once again the seriousness of this appalling threat. That same concern prompted the general membership in 2003 to adopt General Assembly resolution 57/83, which calls upon all Member States to support international efforts to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

The adoption of resolution 1540 (2004) and the formation of the relevant Committee by the Security Council was a step along those same lines. By taking this initiative, the Council intended to fill the gap in the non-proliferation regime. However, a number of serious and important questions were arising at the time — questions that remain valid — especially concerning the compatibility of the resolution with the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter as well as international disarmament instruments.

Mindful of the importance of the tasks with which the 1540 Committee has been entrusted, we should make every effort to ensure that actions by the Security Council do not undermine the United Nations Charter, existing multilateral treaties on weapons of mass destruction or international organizations established in that regard, and do not encroach on the prerogatives and authority of the General Assembly.

We believe that a major deficiency of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006) is their silence on the essential and important issue of disarmament. Equally noticeable, and also unfortunate, is the failure of those resolutions to acknowledge the linkage between non-proliferation and disarmament.

That negligence is in sharp contrast to the relevant General Assembly resolutions and the will of the general membership, which call for urgent progress in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation in order to help maintain international peace and security and contribute to global efforts against terrorism.

The Islamic Republic of Iran shares the view that the objectives of non-proliferation and disarmament are mutually reinforcing and that efforts directed towards non-proliferation should be paralleled by simultaneous efforts aimed at disarmament.

Iran has submitted two national reports to the 1540 Committee. As a State party to all international instruments banning WMD, my country, even before the adoption of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006), had been implementing the measures called for by those resolutions.

Iran has also enacted a set of national laws and regulations to ban, combat and make punishable the smuggling and illicit trafficking of all types of weapons and ammunition.

However, we are of the strong view that the provisions of those resolutions should not be interpreted or implemented in a manner that conflicts with, or alters, the rights and obligations enshrined in internationally negotiated instruments such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), as well as the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

As we have indicated time and again, Iran considers the pursuit and development of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes to be its inalienable right, as recognized under the NPT. Upholding the rights of States parties under international treaties is as essential as ensuring respect for their obligations. Indeed, these regimes, including the NPT, are sustained by a balance between rights and obligations. Iran has clearly and continuously stressed that nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction have no place in its military doctrine. Therefore, the reference made by a very few speakers at this meeting to Iran's peaceful nuclear programme was irrelevant and irresponsible.

In order to dispel any doubts about our peaceful nuclear programme, we have enabled the IAEA to carry out a series of inspections that amounts to the most robust inspection of any IAEA member State. All reports by the IAEA since 2003 have been indicative of the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme, and the Agency has repeatedly reaffirmed that it has not seen any diversion of nuclear material to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in Iran's peaceful nuclear programme. That has also been stressed by the Director General of the IAEA in various public statements.

It is, however, regrettable that despite all these unambiguous acknowledgements, an ill-intended and extensive campaign with political motivations has been under way that is attempting to distort and fabricate facts and realities concerning Iran's peaceful nuclear programme, as we have witnessed at today's meeting in the form of the baseless allegations made against my country by the representatives of the United States, the United Kingdom and the Israeli regime. Yet, in spite of the massive political and propaganda machine that is at work, no one in today's world can accept the convoluted logic that it is all right for them to have nuclear weapons and threaten others with their massive arsenals and aggressive policies, while crying wolf about others' peaceful nuclear programmes.

We have demonstrated our resolve not to give in to the pressure resulting from groundless and unsubstantiated allegations and ulterior political motives. Iran has abided by its obligations under international treaties. It has adhered to them and continues to do so.

The President: After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

> "The Security Council affirms its determination to promote increased multilateral cooperation as an important means of enhancing States' implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).
>
> "The Security Council recalls its resolution 1540 (2004) of 28 April 2004 and resolution 1673 (2006) of 27 April 2006 and stresses the

importance of compliance with resolution 1540 (2004) through the achievement of the implementation of its requirements.

"The Security Council acknowledges with appreciation the activities of international organizations with expertise in the field of non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery covered by resolution 1540 (2004), in particular the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, especially in providing assistance in the implementation of that resolution, without altering their mandates and responsibilities.

"The Security Council takes note of the relevant activities of the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the relevant international arrangements. The Security Council also notes with appreciation the seminars and workshops that have been held with countries and regional and subregional organizations in order to promote experience-sharing and the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

"The Security Council is mindful of the need further to explore with international, regional and subregional organizations experience-sharing and lessons learned in the areas covered by resolution 1540 (2004), and the availability of programmes which might facilitate implementation of the resolution.

"The Security Council reiterates its determination to enhance its cooperation with international organizations and to develop preferred mechanisms for cooperating with those organizations on a case-by-case basis, reflecting the variation in each organization's capacity and mandate, including in assisting States in providing the Committee with information. It still encourages an ongoing process of implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) as set out in the Committee's report of 25 April 2006, as well assistance to Member States in their capacity-building and planning of the process of implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) in accordance with provisions of operative paragraph 7 of resolution 1540 (2004) and paragraph 5 of resolution 1673 (2006)."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2007/4.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5636

Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5636th meeting

Wednesday, 7 March 2007, 11.50 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Kumalo	(South Africa)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Belle
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Okio
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Ms. Tincopa
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Bader
	Russian Federation	Mr. Shcherbak
	Slovakia	Mrs. Tomanová
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
	United States of America	Ms. Wolcott Sanders

Agenda

Women and peace and security

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

07-26179 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 11.50 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President: As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of March, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Peter Burian, Permanent Representative of Slovakia — which today is represented by its Minister for Labour, Social Affairs and Family — for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of February 2007. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council in expressing our deep appreciation to Ambassador Burian and the Slovak delegation for the great diplomatic skill with which they conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Women and peace and security

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council.

"The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, and recalls the relevant statements of its President as reiterating that commitment.

"The Security Council recalls the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/CONF.177/20/Rev.1), the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled 'Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century', and the Declaration of the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women (E/CN.6/2005/11).

"The Security Council reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution.

"The Security Council urges Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict.

"The Security Council urges the Secretary-General to continue to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this regard calls on Member States to provide candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster.

"The Security Council recognizes that the protection and empowerment of women and support for their networks and initiatives are essential in the consolidation of peace to promote the equal and full participation of women and to improve their security and encourages Member States, donors and civil society to provide support in this respect.

"The Security Council recognizes that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security.

"The Security Council recognizes the urgent need to intensify efforts to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard takes note of the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693).

"The Security Council urges the Secretary-General to expand the role and contribution of

women in the United Nations field-based operations, including at the decision-making level, and especially among military observers, civilian police and human rights and humanitarian personnel.

"The Security Council emphasizes the need for the inclusion of gender components, where appropriate, in peacekeeping operations and welcomes United Nations peacekeeping operations policies to promote and protect the rights of women and to take into account a gender perspective as set out in resolution 1325 (2000).

"The Security Council reaffirms also the need to implement fully international human rights and humanitarian law including the four Geneva Conventions that protect the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts.

"The Security Council remains deeply concerned by the pervasiveness of all forms of violence against women and girls in armed conflict, including killing, maiming, grave sexual violence, abductions and trafficking in persons. The Council reiterates its utmost condemnation of such practices and calls on all parties to armed conflict to take specific measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict.

"The Security Council stresses the need to end impunity for acts of gender-based violence in situations of armed conflict and emphasizes the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls, and in this regard stresses the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible, from amnesty provisions.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to ensure that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes take specific account of the situation of women and girls associated with armed forces and armed groups, as well as their children, and provide for their full access to these programmes.

"The Security Council reiterates its call to Member States to continue to implement resolution 1325 (2000), including through the development and implementation of national action plans or other national-level strategies.

"The Council recognizes the important contribution of civil society to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and encourages Member States to continue to collaborate with civil society, in particular with local women's networks and organizations, in order to strengthen its implementation.

"The Security Council decides to remain actively seized of the matter and expresses its commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000)."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2007/5.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12 noon.

United Nations S/PV.5637

Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5637th meeting

Friday, 9 March 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Kumalo	(South Africa)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Belle
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Gayama
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Ansari
	Russian Federation	Mr. Leplinskiy
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
	United States of America	Mr. McBride

Agenda

The situation in the Great Lakes region

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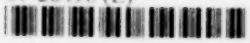
07-26496 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Great Lakes region

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ibrahima Fall, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Fall to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

The Security Council will now hear a briefing by Mr. Ibrahima Fall, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Fall (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to thank you, Sir, for inviting me to participate in this meeting. I also thank your country for the important role it has played and continues to play in stabilizing and bringing peace to the Great Lakes region. During my four-and-a-half year tenure, which ends in a few days, I have enjoyed the unswerving support and wise counsel of your Government.

I also need to thank the Republic of South Africa for the important political and diplomatic role it has played and continues to play in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other parts of the region. The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region would not have been a success if the peace processes in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo had not also proceeded smoothly. Once again, I thank you. Your presidency of the Security Council this month and the convening of this meeting are further testimony to South Africa's commitment.

On 20 December 2006, in the wake of the Nairobi summit of 14 and 15 December — which represented the culmination of the preparatory process for the International Conference, adopting the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region — the Security Council decided to hold a meeting to hear the conclusions emanating from that important summit. On the basis of the Council's conclusions, an additional and final three-month mandate was given to the Office that I have the honour to head in order to ensure a harmonious transition between the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region and the Executive Secretariat of the Conference established at the Nairobi summit.

I will brief the Security Council today on the basis of two themes. The first is the process of transferring competencies from the Office of the Special Representative to the Executive Secretariat of the Conference, which has been under way since 1 January. I will then try very briefly to outline the lessons learned from the experience of preparing for the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region.

With respect to the transfer of competencies, in accordance with the statement issued by the Council on 20 December 2006, we have been working since 1 January with Ambassador Mulamula, Executive Secretary of the Conference, to undertake the transfer from my Office to the Executive Secretariat. In that context, we have worked in three areas.

First, we transferred the institutional memory of the preparatory process for the International Conference. We assembled and transferred all of the documents drafted from June 2003 to March 2006. The transfer is now complete and we are simply waiting for the Executive Secretariat to acquire the necessary facilities in Bujumbura to allow it to finalize the transfer of the documents in hard copy and electronic versions.

Secondly, we assisted in the establishment of the new Executive Secretariat. That primarily involved the drafting and adoption of management, legal, administrative and financial manuals. We then assisted the Executive Secretary in drafting and preparing the headquarters agreement with the Government of Burundi. In the same vein, we helped the Executive Secretary in her other efforts with respect to the Government of Kenya, which holds the Conference presidency. Even as I speak, the Minister for Foreign

Affairs of Kenya is hosting his counterparts at a meeting of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee, to which I will refer again later.

Thirdly, we assisted the Executive Secretary in implementing the recruitment of consultants to the Executive Secretariat for the transition period. As Council members know, the Executive Secretariat does not yet have any real budget. We also helped the Executive Secretary to convene a number of meetings and organized a meeting of national coordinators to adopt the Executive Secretariat's management manuals. We further assisted the Executive Secretary and the Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa in organizing in Kinshasa a regional meeting for parliamentarians of the Great Lakes region. That meeting succeeded, first, in terms of the attendance of representatives of all countries of the region, including a number of delegations led by speakers of senates or houses; and secondly, in adopting a declaration and a report in which the parliamentarians undertook to assist in the prompt ratification and speedy implementation of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region adopted at the Nairobi summit.

We are currently assisting the Executive Secretariat in preparing and organizing a meeting of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Great Lakes region, a body established under the Conference. The meeting is to be held in Bujumbura on 22 and 23 March.

Lastly, we are working with the Executive Secretary to prepare for a meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union to be held on 13 March in Addis Ababa, which will focus specifically on assessing the preparatory process for the Conference and the joint role played by the African Union and the United Nations.

We therefore believe that, as of 31 March, the transfer of competencies will have been carried out in its entirety. In that respect, at our suggestion the Executive Secretary has written a letter to the Secretary-General requesting that all of the equipment from the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General be transferred as a donation to the new Executive Secretariat of the Conference. The Secretary-General, with whom I met yesterday, is monitoring this request very closely and has issued guidance so that a positive and rapid response may be given to him.

Perhaps the time has now come to try to draw some lessons from this entire preparatory process. The first lesson to be drawn is clearly the importance of the role of the Security Council in the preparatory process and, as a result, the importance of the role that the Council should play in the implementation of the Pact.

Throughout the preparatory process, the Office of the Special Representative has received diplomatic and political support from the Council here in New York and in the field. This support could have been more effective if it had been accompanied by support in terms of staff recruitment. The Council preferred to maintain the Office's staffing at the skeletal level. Without the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which backed us up with two officers, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), which provided an officer, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, which also seconded one person, the Office of Special Representative of the Secretary-General would not have been in the position to carry out its function of facilitating the preparatory process.

It is essential that the Council acknowledge the consequences. The Council cannot issue a mandate as important as organizing an international conference on the Great Lakes region that includes 11 countries — and the Council had insisted that the conference be expanded to 11 countries — without providing the resources necessary to complete the task.

The second lesson to be drawn is to look into the future with respect to the Council's role. It is important that the process of ratifying the Pact be done as soon as possible. I will come back to this point. But the Council needs to support and accompany this ratification process in order that it take place as quickly as possible. The region is still fragile. The Conference process has created an atmosphere of trust, but this atmosphere is tenuous and, without prompt ratification and rapid implementation of this Pact, it could deteriorate at any moment. Therefore, I urge the Council to use its moral authority to support and boost prompt ratification of this Pact.

The third lesson to be drawn is one concerning the member countries. The preparatory process was built on three principles — the principle of ownership, the principle of inclusion and the principle of partnerships.

The principle of ownership is essential. Today, more than ever, the countries of the region need to effectively exercise their ownership of the process, which, beyond establishment of the secretariat, encompasses the rapid ratification of the Pact, the payment of assessments to the regular budget for the secretariat and the creation of the Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development.

This political commitment was reaffirmed by the heads of State, but it is essential that the commitment be confirmed by action. To date, only two countries have paid their assessments to the Conference secretariat. Furthermore, with respect to ratification, the Office of the Special Representative is not yet aware of any State having ratified the Pact. It is therefore essential that this primary responsibility of countries of the region be highlighted, and for that I also call here on the Council's authority.

It is essential that the priorities adopted by the Conference with regard to programmes of action and protocols be implemented effectively. On this point, there are number of key projects, some of which have received financing upstream. That is the case with reviving the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries, for which the European Union has already committed to contributing $5 million for relaunching the secretariat and $45 million for project implementation.

As we know, the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries includes the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Burundi, that is to say that, together with Uganda, it is a circle of fire, the most unstable part of Great Lakes region. Thus is urgent that these projects be quickly implemented.

Similarly, the Pact also laid out transborder areas of development and established border areas for shared management of border problems. Here again, the Conference could anticipate implementation, particularly by drawing on an already existing initiative, namely, the Tripartite Plus One initiative, which includes the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda, under the authority of the United States of America. It is essential that, as in the work of the preparatory process for the Conference with the authorities in Washington, there be better synergy between the Tripartite Plus One and the projects of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region with respect to transborder zones involving those four countries.

Lastly, it is essential to maintain the momentum from the Conference. For that, during the Security Council's periodic visits to the region, particular importance needs to be given to implementation of the Pact. That could also draw upon peacekeeping missions that the Council has decided upon, specifically, with regard to the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi.

Moreover, I should say that, with respect to the Conference, the principle of inclusiveness needs to be maintained. That means giving non-governmental players, particularly women and young people and civil society, but also parliamentarians, the possibility to take part in the process of implementing the Pact. The Pact, if it is properly applied, could provide an example of a regional, comprehensive approach that could be duplicated in some other regions in Africa or elsewhere because, from experience, we know that this kind of regional comprehensive approach, bringing together peace and security, democracy and good governance, economic development and regional integration, is the only likely way to tackle all of the problems of human security in a comprehensive manner.

Mr. President, I conclude by saying to you, with a sense of pride, what a privilege and honour it has been for me to serve both the United Nations and Africa through this preparation for the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region.

The President: I thank Mr. Fall for his briefing. I shall now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make comments or ask questions in response to the briefing we have just heard.

Nana Effah-Apenteng (Ghana): At the outset, let me thank Mr. Ibrahima Fall, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, for his briefing and commend him for the good work he has been doing, which has contributed immensely to peace, security and development in that region. On behalf of my delegation, I would like to extend our best wishes to him in his next assignment after the end of this month, when the mandate of his current assignment expires.

Barely three months ago, this Council had the opportunity to congratulate the Governments and

people of the Great Lakes region on their signing the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in that region and called upon the regional leaders to commit themselves to the implementation of all aspects of that agreement. It was the hope of the Council that the signing of the Pact would turn the region from a state of desolation engendered by a long period of instability, violent conflict, insecurity, carnage, widespread violation of fundamental human rights and underdevelopment into a state of sustainable peace, security and socio-economic development.

In this connection, we are encouraged that a regional parliamentary meeting of the Great Lakes region, which took place in Kinshasa, supported the Pact, which was signed at the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region in December 2006 in Nairobi. We are also delighted to note that the parliamentarians acknowledged their role in contributing to the early ratification and implementation of the Great Lakes regional peace pact. This entire process will also require the sensitization of the people, as well as strengthening relations between civil society, Governments and parliaments.

The parliamentarians of the Great Lakes region also committed themselves to establishing a regional parliamentary forum in order to encourage dialogue and to contribute to the mobilization of internal and external resources for the implementation of the programme. It is important to heed the call for States to honour their financial contributions to the budget of the secretariat of the Great Lakes if the Pact is to succeed.

While commending the efforts of the legislators in moving the process of ratification and implementation of the Pact a step forward, it is worthwhile to mention that all of these good intentions require the commitment and political will of the regional leaders to succeed. The leaders should rise above their national and sectional interests and put the interests of the Great Lakes region first. The parliamentarians must see themselves as uniquely placed to encourage their respective member States to harmonize their national legislation for the implementation of the various protocols.

Regional ownership of the process is essential for peace and sustainable development of the region. A key element of full ownership of this endeavour will require joint and coordinated efforts of neighbouring countries and regional institutions. The regional leaders should also endeavour to convert the Conference into a regional peacebuilding forum for the prevention, management and peaceful settlement of conflicts.

In view of the current unstable situation in eastern Congo and northern Uganda, there is an urgent need for leaders of the Great Lakes region to cooperate on cross-border security and trade, with the aim of spurring development after decades of civil conflict. Dialogue should become the only medium for resolving conflicts.

For its part, the international community should continue to monitor closely the peace talks between the Government and rebel groups in Uganda and support the implementation of the outcome of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, especially as demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants are seen as crucial in the efforts toward the region's progress in the areas of good governance and economic recovery.

In this regard, we commend the rebel groups in eastern Congo for agreeing to disarm, and we urge the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to intensify its efforts at retraining ex-combatants and reintegrating them into the national armed forces. The international community should complement these efforts by supporting regional peacebuilding projects that address the plight of returnees, stem the flow of small arms and light weapons, check the activities of mercenaries in the region, promote demining techniques and curb the illegal exploitation and illicit trading of natural resources.

Finally, we commend the international community, including the joint United Nations-African Union (AU) secretariat and its team of experts, led by the Secretary-General's Special Representative and the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes Region, for their contribution to the successful completion of the two conferences in December 2006 and February 2007. We also support the recommendation of the regional parliamentary meeting for the Great Lakes region that the international community, notably the United Nations and the AU, continue their support for peace and reconstruction of the Great Lakes region.

Mr. Belle (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, I would like to thank you for organizing this informational meeting on a region in the heart of Africa that is dear to Belgium. I would also like to

thank Mr. Fall, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for the briefing he has just given us.

Last December, the Security Council had an opportunity to congratulate the countries of the Great Lakes region for having brought to a positive conclusion the second summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, held in Nairobi on 15 December 2006. The Council also congratulated the countries for having signed the Pact on Security, Stability and Development for the Great Lakes Region on that occasion.

The adoption of this Pact was preceded by, and was made possible by, particularly positive developments in the region. In August 2005, Burundi entered a new era. On 6 December 2006, the Democratic Republic of the Congo placed President Kabila in office following elections that put an end to a lengthy transitional period. In Uganda, discussions with the Lord's Resistance Army are under way. And, finally, we have seen considerable progress in Rwanda in recent years.

These developments are, first of all, the result of the efforts and the tenacity shown by the people of the region themselves, supported in these efforts by the international community. It is now crucial for the commitments undertaken to be truly implemented.

In the first place, we need to ensure that the regional follow-up mechanism — a secretariat headed by Ms. Liberata Mulamula, Executive Secretary — becomes fully operational. Setting up the secretariat in Bujumbura will make it possible for the United Nations and the African Union (AU) to hand this task over to the member countries of the Conference. For the secretariat to be truly operational, it is important for the countries of the region to provide it solid assistance, supported in that by donors. Belgium, for its part, is prepared to consider support.

Secondly, the Pact on Security, Stability and Development must be ratified in all countries of the region. Mr. Fall has just reminded us of how important that ratification is. In this respect, my delegation welcomes the holding of the regional parliamentary meeting on the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. That meeting, held from 26 to 28 February in Kinshasa was co-organized by the Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA) and co-financed by my country Belgium hopes that this meeting will help speed up the ratification process to which I have just referred.

Finally, it is important for the Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development that the implementation of the Pact become fully operational so that this Fund may fulfil its role. Each of the 11 member States must comply with their commitments and provide funding. For its part, Belgium is prepared to consider contributions to specific financing mechanisms for projects and contributions as well to the Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development, once the Fund has been declared operational by the African Development Bank. For my country, the programme of action for peace and stability and the confidence-building measures are particularly important, as is the protocol to combat the illegal exportation of natural resources.

I would also like to underline the importance of greater regional integration among the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Burundi. We believe that the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (ECGLC) has an important role to play in this regard through establishing greater regional integration among countries that have had to deal with dire situations but that are now called upon to work together to accelerate the economic and social progress that their people expect.

The relaunch of ECGLC will provide support for the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region agreed at the International Conference, which provides for cross-border security and development in eastern Congo, Rwanda and Burundi. The ECGLC will also provide support for other integration efforts already under way in the region, in particular the East African Community and the Economic Community of Central African States. Finally, it can provide a framework for cooperation in the areas of energy, regional development and agriculture. Belgium hopes that a ministerial meeting of ECGLC will take place in April in Bujumbura, thereby re-launching that important instrument.

I could not conclude without expressing warm thanks to Mr. Ibrahima Fall for his tireless efforts in support of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region throughout his mandate.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): I, too, would like to thank Mr. Ibrahima Fall for his briefing. As his tenure will soon be coming to an end, I

would also like to thank him for the excellent job that he has done as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region. We know how closely he has been working with the African Union with a view to facilitating the Conference process.

The signing in Nairobi of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region provided new impetus to cooperation efforts among the countries of the Great Lakes region. Such regional cooperation is an essential component of the internal stabilization process that a number of countries in the region have had to undertake — a process that, for some, is still under way.

As my delegation has already emphasized, we believe that in this context two aspects are particularly important. The first is security. As this is a cross-border problem, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region opens a special framework within which to seek solutions. The problem of security continues to be relevant, although it is less pressing today than in the past, which is a welcome development.

The second aspect is economic relationships. Each country in the region will be able to develop in a sustainable manner only if it can do so in the context of a regional economic framework that is stable and balanced. That requires strengthened economic cooperation and the transparent and mutually beneficial management of the natural resources of the region.

I would like to welcome the determination of the States of the region to work together to overcome their common challenges. Such regional efforts must continue. To that end, the States parties to the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region must take ownership of that new instrument. Ownership is a prerequisite for the success of the process undertaken at Dar es-Salaam and Nairobi. I therefore welcome the decision of the States parties to the Conference to seek to continue and enhance the process under way through the implementation of regional monitoring mechanisms.

The international community, and the United Nations in particular, will remain committed, together with the Great Lakes region, to contributing to the success of the process. The Security Council will soon have an opportunity to reconsider the mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with a view to adapting it to the post-transition context. The Peacebuilding Commission will provide support for reconstruction and development efforts in Burundi. More broadly, the United Nations system will, we hope, remain deeply committed to the region, for which is has spared no efforts.

Mr. Kleib (Indonesia): I would like to begin by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, Mr. Ibrahima Fall, for his final briefing on the situation in the area. I would like to commend him for a job well done since he assumed his duties as Special Representative.

It is with satisfaction that one can say that the situation in the Great Lakes region has improved to a great extent when compared with that of just a few years ago, when the international community tended to regard the area as a byword for spiralling violence, humanitarian chaos and social tragedy.

Indeed, before our very eyes, almost all of the countries in the region have successfully emerged from conflict and are on a steady and sound path towards economic and social development. Over the past few years there has been steady progress in the areas of peace, security and democratization. That is a remarkable achievement, and Indonesia is pleased to commend all of the nations and peoples of the Great Lakes region for their efforts and their determination to create the foundation for lasting peace and progress.

My delegation is of the view that the convening of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region last December, followed by the signing of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, is the culmination of efforts to establish durable peace, security, stability and sustainable development in the area. It is now time to translate those aspirations into a concrete programme of projects and plans.

In that regard, it should be noted that there are still some outstanding issues to be addressed by the countries of the region. These include combating the illegal exploitation of natural resources and the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, addressing humanitarian and human rights issues, supporting institution-building, strengthening the rule of law and advancing good governance.

The signing of the Pact, as well as the creation of the Conference secretariat, will also bring the countries

in the region to the level of the new regional ownership concept. This approach is in line with Security Council resolution 1653 (2006), which, inter alia, urged countries in the region to develop a subregional approach for promoting good relations, peaceful coexistence and the peaceful resolution of disputes.

Finally, my delegation would also like to appeal to donor countries, as well as to United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, to consider providing necessary assistance to the Conference secretariat and the Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development in support of the implementation of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region.

We have travelled very far with the Governments and the peoples of what was once a very difficult region. With the finish line in sight, we must do everything necessary to help the people to complete this remarkable and irreversible journey.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like first of all to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ibrahima Fall, for his briefing. We would like to express our gratitude to him for his tireless efforts over the past few years to assist the Great Lakes region. I would also like to express my best wishes to him.

We are pleased to note the recent important progress in the peace process in the region. Countries there have gradually emerged from the shadow of conflict and are actively carrying out post-conflict reconstruction. The second summit of the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region and the meeting of regional parliamentarians were successfully completed. The signing of the Stability, Security and Development Pact for the region is an indication of the new important progress by the countries to resolve conflicts themselves and to make joint efforts towards economic development.

We believe that through dialogue and consultation, the countries of the region can seek appropriate solutions to the issues and make further efforts to consolidate good-neighbourly relations. We hope that the International Conference can continue to provide a platform for the countries of the region to carry out constructive dialogue and cooperation, so as bring about lasting peace and stability in the region soon as possible.

Peacebuilding efforts in the region cannot be carried out without the support of the international community. The international community should continue to monitor the countries in the region emerging from conflict, as well as to increase its economic assistance to them and help them in capacity-building. As a friend of all the countries of the region, China will, in the framework of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, continue to strengthen its multidimensional cooperation with those countries in order to make an active contribution to the achievement of lasting peace, stability, and development in the region.

Finally, China would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the African Union and the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes Region for their contributions to peace and stability in the region.

Mr. Gayama (Congo) (*spoke in French*): As my country is one of the 11 that make up the Great Lakes region in the larger sense that Mr. Ibrahima Fall mentioned, it is on behalf of all those countries — my own, of course, but also those represented in the Chamber, including those whose representatives are seated at the side of the Council Chamber as well as those whose representatives are currently away from New York — that I would like today to express our gratitude to Mr. Ibrahima Fall, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his professionalism and commitment in carrying out his duties, which consisted in establishing community institutions for the Great Lakes region. We thank him most sincerely for that.

As Mr. Fall concludes his mission, it can be said that the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region is now a reality. It is indeed a fragile institution and must for that reason be strengthened — specifically, by ensuring that the countries of the region assume ownership for the mechanisms that have been established. That is a requirement that must first be met before the support of the international community can continue. The countries of the region should send a clear message as to their commitment to the important tool for peace and development that they have now established.

The ratification of the Stability, Security and Development Pact then becomes a key and indispensable requirement. Generally speaking, that ownership can move from dream to the reality that, in

all countries of the region, Governments and peoples have always called for, namely, peace and development.

The Great Lakes region is of key importance, not just for Africa but also for the world. That region is where one finds the Congo River Basin, which, after the Amazon, is the world's second largest ecological lung, as it were. The region is also home to established institutions operating to some degree or other. To a certain extent, those institutions constitute the fabric of the region. I am referring to the Economic Community of Central African States, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries, whose reactivation is called for by all those concerned about improving the situation in the region.

The international community has therefore rightly called the Great Lakes region a special reconstruction and development area. We therefore believe that it is urgent that the Community's secretariat be able to function properly. The indispensable support of the international community must be channelled through the secretariat and its member countries in order to ensure that the entire structure can operate.

With regard to institutional coherence, it is being developed on the basis of the genuine cultural unity that exists in the region. That is evident in the major languages utilized in the region, namely, Swahili and Lingala, among others. That will undoubtedly contribute to an inclusive approach, in which we believe civil society will be the primary participant and beneficiary. It is for that reason that we welcome the commitment undertaken by parliamentarians of the region meeting recently in Kinshasa with a view, primarily, to ratifying the Pact.

There is no doubt that many factors are contributing to fragility in the region, especially given that all the elements of peace have not yet been fully consolidated. The sad reality is that small arms are circulating freely. Among others, that situation benefits all those who illegally exploit the vast natural resources of the region. Fragility is also evident in the fact that there is still mistrust among the members of the region, and that mistrust must be eliminated. The region therefore still needs the international community.

In that connection, we think that the role of the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes Region will continue to be welcomed for some time to come. We support the idea of the Organization's continuing to provide cooperation to the regional secretariat in technical and material terms and in every possible way.

We know that the United Nations is now very much involved throughout the region. It has been working in Burundi, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and countries adjacent to the region, particularly the Sudan, Chad and the Central African Republic. But the United Nations has not done only that. In Central Africa, it has also long promoted the activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, which some time ago signed a non-aggression pact bringing together many countries, particularly members of the Economic Community of Central African States. All of that reflects the historic United Nations commitment to this region, whose recovery will be a very important step for Africa as a whole.

That is why, at this point, it would be good if the Security Council could define, or seek to encourage the Secretariat to define, all support modalities that the United Nations can provide to the Great Lakes region — mindful, obviously, of lessons learned from experience, such as those succinctly referred to by Mr. Ibrahima Fall.

Mr. McBride (United States of America): I want to thank Special Representative Fall for his briefing. The United States joins the others in this Chamber in thanking him for four years of leadership in the Great Lakes region.

Over the past decade, this resource-rich region in the heart of Africa has suffered from wrenching, destabilizing conflicts that have produced almost unimaginable suffering. Today the situation remains fragile and the challenges remain immense, but the prospects for peace and development have improved, in part because of the attention of the international community, but even more so because of the will and efforts of the people in the region to overcome these setbacks.

The transition in Burundi and the historic elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are among a number of encouraging developments. We have all noted that a spirit of trust and cooperation is growing among the States in the region. The Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, signed in Nairobi on 15 December 2006 by

11 African States, was a promising conclusion to the United Nations-sponsored International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. This agreement has the potential to become a means of preventing future conflicts in Central Africa, while offering a road map for consolidating democracy, good governance and development.

We join others in encouraging the States in the region to live up to their commitments, to respect national sovereignty, to seek the peaceful settlement of disputes and to cooperate to strengthen the economies of the region. That is a vision that cannot be imposed; regional ownership of this process is vital.

Bilateral agreements and other regional efforts can and should complement this process. We would note, in that regard, one initiative that my country has facilitated: the Tripartite Plus Joint Commission, which is aimed at promoting security and stability in and among the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. We are confident that those countries, which are also signatories to the Nairobi Pact, will fulfil their commitments to enhance cooperation for peace among Commission members.

Mr. Leplinskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation expresses its gratitude to Mr. Ibrahima Fall, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, for his substantive briefing. Progress in the peace process in the Great Lakes region would not have been possible without the active involvement of the Office of the Special Representative and the African Union. Together with the regional secretariat, they have made much progress in terms of organizing the Dar es-Salaam and Nairobi summits.

Today's meeting attests eloquently to the attention that the Security Council is devoting to the situation in the Great Lakes region. We are pleased to note encouraging developments. The Democratic Republic of the Congo has held its first democratic elections in four decades. Peacebuilding efforts are under way in Burundi, whose problems are on the agenda of the recently established Peacebuilding Commission. Issues related to northern Uganda are being gradually addressed; peacebuilding measures have been elaborated and are being carried out. Multilateral security mechanisms involving the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi are being implemented. Clearly, none of that would have been possible without the assistance of subregional organizations, partner countries, donors and international financial institutions.

A critical event last year was the signing by heads of State of the Great Lakes region, at Nairobi in December 2006, of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, which ushered in a new era of post-conflict rehabilitation and social development. The primary task for participants in the International Conference, now and in the near future, will be to ratify the Pact and to begin the progressive implementation of decisions taken and arrangements agreed.

On 31 March the mandate of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region will conclude. The Special Representative, Mr. Fall, and his staff have done a great job and deserve the highest praise. Let me also take this opportunity to express our gratitude to all those who have assisted and will continue to assist the Great Lakes region in seeking to achieve lasting peace, stability and economic progress: the United Republic of Tanzania, South Africa, the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes Region, the regional Preparatory Committee and the National Coordinators.

Mr. Mantovani (Italy): First of all, I would like to thank as our partner the Special Representative, Ambassador Fall, for his comprehensive and detailed briefing and for his tireless work in these years of valuable changes for the Great Lakes region.

I wish to commend the positive developments in the region, such as the successful and peaceful conclusion of the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the efforts of Burundi in the peacebuilding process, the achievement of stabilization in Rwanda and the positive achievement of the Nairobi Conference in December.

The Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, adopted in Nairobi, is a fundamental starting point towards establishing lasting peace and sustainable development. However, we remain concerned about the human rights situation and the important issue of the illegal exploitation of natural resources, which affect the economic perspective and sustainable development of the whole region. At the same time, we would like to express our concerns about the stalemate in the Juba peace talks and the continuing threat that the Lord's Resistance Army

poses to the peace and stability of the whole Great Lakes region.

Good governance and the fight against corruption are important pillars of the follow-up to the Great Lakes Conference. It would be interesting for us if Ambassador Fall could elaborate further on measures to be taken in that field by the countries involved.

Ms. Pierce (United Kingdom): I, too, would like to join others in welcoming the Special Representative here today, thanking him for his briefing, and also to express our appreciation for his service and commitment to the work he has been doing and to the work of his team.

May I begin by underlining my own country's commitment to security, stability and development in the Great Lakes region. In support of those goals, we are providing approximately $1 billion in bilateral development and humanitarian programmes in the region, and we will continue to sustain a substantial effort, bilaterally and through the European Union.

As other representatives have said this morning, the signature of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development at the Great Lakes summit in December 2006 was a historic moment. It is a significant opportunity to move towards lasting peace in the region. We strongly urge, therefore, that the leaders of the Great Lakes region press ahead with implementation of the Pact. We hope that the new Executive Secretariat, under the most able leadership of Ambassador Mulamula of Tanzania, will be established in Bujumbura in the near future.

The challenges that the countries and people of the region face are shared, and the solutions must be shared too. We will play our part in helping to resolve them.

So much of what has happened in the region in recent years is linked to events in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is an important aspect of the Security Council's work. We were awe-inspired by the determined efforts made by the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to overcome the catastrophic effects of conflict and to move forward, through democratic elections, to a secure and better future. They deserve our praise and our help for what they have achieved.

The United Nations, too, deserves our congratulations for its part in that achievement. We look forward to receiving the Secretary-General's recommendations next week on the future role that the United Nations can play in helping the elected Congolese authorities meet the needs and aspirations of the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Security Council should, in our view, also continue to monitor closely progress in the peace talks between the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army, which uses the Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as its base. That conflict has driven more than 2 million people from their homes and, while some of those have begun to return, stability on the ground in northern Uganda remains fragile. The United Kingdom welcomes the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, former President Chissano, to find a negotiated solution, and we hope and believe that the Security Council will lend its strong vocal support to his efforts.

Finally, may I urge the countries of the region to join us in and add their weight to efforts to address urgently the worsening crisis in the Darfur region of the Sudan, one of the signatories of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development. It is sobering to note that, just as the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi and elsewhere in the region are beginning to experience the rewards and opportunities that peace brings, their neighbours in Darfur are being denied the most basic means of survival.

Mr. Burian (Slovakia): We thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Fall for his briefing, and would like to join other Council members in congratulating him and other members of his team on their commendable work carried out during his term in office, including the preparation and organization of the Second International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region.

We agree with the observation made by Mr. Fall that the momentum and positive atmosphere created by the outcomes of the summit should be maintained and utilized to strengthen regional cooperation through the implementation of the decisions of the Conference and to strengthen peace and democratization processes in the countries of the region. The signing of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region is an important step for building trust and confidence in the region, and should be fully supported

and followed up by the speedy implementation of its provisions.

We congratulate the countries of the region on establishing the Conference Executive Secretariat in Bujumbura and the Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development in the Great Lakes Region. We express our hope that they will become fully operational as soon as possible. We believe that the international community must continue to provide full support and assistance in that area, and we share the concern expressed by Mr. Fall that the positive atmosphere of trust that has been created could quickly evaporate if we do not manage to carry through the decisions and outcomes of the International Conference and strengthen regional confidence and cooperation.

In that regard, it is crucial for the countries of the region to assume full ownership of the process, including by paying their assessments to the budget. We agree with Mr. Fall that a successful project of regional cooperation in the Great Lakes region can positively influence developments in other parts of the African continent, serving as a source of inspiration for others to follow.

Nevertheless, despite all the positive developments in the region, we remain concerned about several pockets of instability in the area. In particular, we are deeply concerned about the situation regarding the peace negotiations with the Lord's Resistance Army. The stalemate in the peace negotiations and the inability to extend the truce have returned us to the situation that prevailed in northern Uganda and the surrounding region a year ago. Unless we proceed quickly and resolutely on that issue, we may miss the best opportunity for peace in Uganda that has emerged in 20 years. In that regard, we look forward to the visit of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas, Joaquim Chissano, to New York later this month and to hearing his ideas on how the Security Council can help to reinvigorate the peace process.

Mr. Al-Ansari (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to thank Mr. Ibrahima Fall, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, for his briefing. I wish him every success following the end of his tenure this month.

I commend the special attention that the Secretary-General has paid to the Great Lakes region; his field visits to certain countries there upon assuming his office; his attendance at the summit of the African Union in Addis Ababa in late January; and the important meetings he held at the margins of the summit with representatives of important countries of the Great Lakes region.

We recall Security Council resolution 1653 (2006), adopted following the First International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region, held in Dar es-Salaam in 2004. We also recall the conclusions and declaration adopted at the Second Conference, held in Nairobi in 2006, which resulted in the signing of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region by the regional heads of State. The Security Council adopted a presidential statement supporting the summit and endorsing its results following the open debate held on 20 December 2006, under my delegation's presidency. We look forward to the ratification of the Pact so that its practical implementation can begin.

One of the tangible positive steps taken by the second Conference is the establishment of regional follow-up and monitoring mechanisms through the establishment of the secretariat in Bujumbura. We pay special attention to the need for payment of the assessed contributions to the secretariat in order to ensure its smooth functioning. Its work will include the promotion of all stakeholders and actors in civil society and dealing with some of the main questions in the Great Lakes region, including those pertaining to women, youth, reform of the security sector and exploitation of natural resources in the region.

It will be extremely important, in this regard, to set priorities in implementation. We appreciate the role of the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes Region and urge it to continue to play its role in the implementation of the Pact. We also urge all international partners to continue their positive involvement, particularly after the decision of the Great Lakes region to establish a trust fund for that purpose. That means there will be an appropriate mechanism to give the necessary support.

We must not lose sight of the fact that there is a need to implement previous resolutions of the Security Council, which are extremely important to the countries of the Great Lakes region, particularly those pertaining the prevention of conflicts, assessment of the problem of armed groups and violations of human

rights, as well as ways and means to preserve peace and security in the region and solving the problems of displaced persons and refugees in the region.

In this regard, we note particularly the implementation of resolutions 1625 (2005), 1631 (2005), 1649 (2005), 1653 (2006), which, we believe, will be a very important factor in ensuring the success of the mechanisms established by the Great Lakes region. Implementation will constitute a connection between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

We also believe there is a need to benefit from the role of other international regional and subregional organizations in order to find means to deal with the problems of the region. The Peacebuilding Commission's discharge of its mandate in the region will have a direct and positive influence on the resolution of the problems of the African continent as a whole.

Fully aware of the challenges facing us, we believe that sustainable development will not be achieved without good governance and assured and adequate sources of income, which can be achieved only through security and stability. Security and stability cannot be achieved, in turn, without clear cooperation among the countries and the peoples of the region and the support of the international community as a whole. That will facilitate the conclusion of transparent economic accords between the countries of the region and international financial institutions. Those accords and agreements must be based on a clear understanding of the socio-economic situation in those countries and the cancellation of their foreign debt, or at least the amelioration of their debt situation.

Projects that are founded on sound economic and financial bases must also be established, particularly in view of the strategic location of the region on the continent of Africa and its immense natural resources.

We also would like to reiterate the need for regional ownership of all programmes and projects carried out in the Great Lakes region. I would like to ask Mr. Fall about efforts to implement the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region. When does he expect the Pact to be fully implemented? And what are the impediments that are blocking its implementation?

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of South Africa.

South Africa joins other members of the Security Council in congratulating Mr. Fall on his commitment to the efforts to bring about peace, security and development in the Great Lakes region. South Africa is truly honoured by the kind of service he has given to the Great Lakes region and to Africa as a whole throughout his service to the United Nations.

We also take this opportunity to pay tribute to Mr. Fall's efforts in initiating, together with the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. We recall that the International Conference was initiated after decades of armed conflict and humanitarian disasters in the region, in particular the genocide in Rwanda and the conflicts in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We are pleased that we have recognized that development has a political meaning, encompassing security and stability, without which no sustainable development is possible. This recognition has brought a refreshing outlook to our understanding of peace in the Great Lakes region.

Today, the Great Lakes region in Africa is on the threshold of establishing lasting peace. There has been a reduction in both intra-State and inter-State conflicts. Even though we are still concerned about the negative forces that remain active, particularly in the eastern part of the Congo, tensions have been reduced.

Nonetheless, South Africa is pleased at the progress that has been made in countries such as Burundi, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which recently inaugurated a democratic Government. The region has continued to suffer from the lack of resources to help it meet developmental objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals. We are pleased that Mr. Fall's efforts have contributed immensely to addressing the critical and sensitive issue of plundering national and natural resources in the region.

The region is also experiencing increased political dialogue and collaboration in the resolution of conflicts and towards post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding. There is now a chance that we may be witnessing a new direction towards peace, stability and development in the Great Lakes region.

In this regard, the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region signed by countries of the region is significant because it creates a positive environment for sustainable development. The fact that it allows the leaders of the region to meet regularly is, in itself, very positive, indeed.

South Africa is privileged to have been part of the process leading to the convening of the International Conference. We remain committed to assisting the region in effectively addressing the objectives that remain on the transitional agenda. Today, we look back with pride and with hope for an African renaissance in the Great Lakes region.

I thank Mr. Fall very much for his service.

I now resume my function as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ibrahima Fall to respond to comments and questions that were raised.

Mr. Fall: First of all, Mr. President, I would like to thank you for the appreciation expressed by you and your colleagues in the Security Council for the work done by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region. I will convey those congratulations to my colleagues, as well as to the other part of the joint secretariat, which is the African Union (AU).

I am sure that the debate that has just taken place will contribute immensely to helping the countries realize the importance for them to work very quickly for the speedy ratification of the Pact and for its full implementation.

Questions were raised about good governance and the fight against corruption. I must say that from the beginning the issue of bad governance — lack of democracy — has been central to the discussions that led, first, to the adoption by the Dar es-Salaam summit of the Dar es-Salaam Declaration, which underlines the importance of lack of democracy and lack of good governance as factors that explain the conflicts and wars that affected the region for the last decade. For that reason, the cluster on democracy and good governance is one of the most important within the Conference.

Several protocols and projects are dealing with the fight against lack of good governance and lack of democracy. They include the protocol on democracy and good governance, the protocol on judicial cooperation among the members of the Conference, the protocol on prevention of crimes against humanity, crimes of genocide and so on, and the protocol on illegal exploitation of natural resources. All these protocols are really focusing on the centrality of good governance and good democracy and on the fight against corruption as a pillar for the stabilization of the region.

Among the projects is the regional centre for democracy, good governance and human rights, and several forums that offer a framework through which women, youth and civil society regionally can meet regularly, discuss issues and put pressure on their Governments to respect democracy and good governance and to fight corruption.

Another question concerned the conditions for the Pact to be implemented and the obstacles to implementation. As for the first part of the question, according to the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes region, it is only when 8 of the 11 countries of the region have ratified the Pact that implementation will be enforced, 30 days after the last ratification. We proposed that because one had to find a balance between full ratification of the Pact by all 11 countries — which is what we expect — and, on the other hand, avoiding the fact that failure by one country to ratify the Pact would mean its not entering into force. So that was the balance between unanimity versus the right of veto of one country and the simple majority. We believe that if the commitments taken by both the heads of State and then the heads of parliaments are respected, the Pact could enter into force very soon.

Concerning the obstacles, these are somehow related to the bureaucracy of ratification, because so long as the treaty has not been duly ratified, there is no obligation for a Government to implement it. However, countries committed themselves during the Nairobi summit to doing their utmost not to affect their commitment to ratification.

I think that cooperation between the United Nations and the AU is central to the Pact's implementation framework, and the proposal to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council is critical.

I take this opportunity, once again, to underline the importance of the cooperation we have had with the African Union. This is the first time we have had a joint secretariat. It is not a decision taken by the United Nations or by the African Union, but it is a de facto decision that was taken by my Office and that of the African Union to call ourselves, together as family, a joint secretariat. I must also say that both the African Union Chairman, President Konaré, and its Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Said Djinnit, have been constantly involved in cooperative efforts towards the success of the Conference, as illustrated by the next meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council on the outcome of the Nairobi summit.

Of course, speakers in this morning's Council meeting have alluded to some concern in the region — in Darfur and in Uganda, and on the circulation of small arms and light weapons. As far as the negotiations in Juba between the LRA and the Government of Uganda are concerned, as this Security Council knows, President Chissano is currently visiting the region and talking to the interlocutors, and the Department of Political Affairs is happy to announce that President Chissano will brief the Security Council next week on the outcome of his démarche. Darfur, of course, is a very important concern. We believe that we have to combine the implementation of the Abuja Agreement and facing the humanitarian situation in Darfur. Lastly, but not least, on the subject of small arms and light weapons, I am glad to inform the Council that the European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA) and the Congolese authorities are organizing a wide-ranging meeting in Brazzaville on 28 and 29 March 2007 to tackle this issue, especially within the Congo.

The role of the United Nations in the implementation has also been central to today's discussion. Beyond the political and diplomatic role of this Security Council, it is important that the United Nations be equipped to articulate a strategy to accompany the implementation of the Pact, both at the institutional and operational levels. I am glad to say that, even before the summit, within the Steering Committee, where all the United Nations agencies are represented in Nairobi, each agency was encouraged to articulate its own strategy and then come together to merge their different strategies into a whole United Nations system strategy to accompany the implementation of the Pact. The United Nations Development Programme has already finalized its regional strategy for the implementation of the Pact, and all the agencies are working on that issue.

The Group of Friends and the European Union have also been alluded to. I would like to take this opportunity to again underline the fundamental role that the Group of Friends has played during the whole process of preparing for the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. I have just returned from The Hague, where a few days ago the Group of Friends held a meeting devoted to how best to support the Conference secretariat and Ambassador Mulamula during the establishment of the secretariat and until June 2007. The Group of Friends should have met again by that time to consider its future as the Group of Friends for the Great Lakes region.

The European Union has also been actively involved, especially through Mr. Aldo Ajello, its Special Envoy to the Great Lakes region, and I would also like to take this opportunity to pay homage to him for his actions.

Last but not least, the issue of financial requirements for the implementation of the Pact has also been central to our discussions. I would like to take a symbolic approach. The cost of implementing projects and protocol in the context of the Conference on the Great Lakes Region is about $2 billion. That is a lot of money. And of course, the responsibility of the Governments of the region is pivotal — it is crucial. But the international community cannot hide behind that central responsibility and avoid its own responsibility. The $2 billion is important, but let me say that it represents about two years of the functioning of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As an African, I believe that the firefighter approach that the international community, including the United Nations, generally adopts by deploying peacekeeping forces is crucial — but it is not enough. It is better to prevent, it is better to reconstruct so as to prevent the resurgence of conflict. In that framework, $2 billion is not very important.

The President: I thank Mr. Fall for the clarifications that he has provided.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.